DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 360 212 SO 023 049

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TITLE Young People in the European Community: Towards an Agenda for Research and Policy.
INSTITUTION Commission of the European Communities, Brussels (Belgium).
PUB DATE Jun 91
NOTE 140p.; A product of the Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth Task Force.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Development; Cultural Context; Educational Objectives; *Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; International Relations; *Policy Formation; *Public Policy; Research Needs
IDENTIFIERS *European Community

ABSTRACT

This report considers the character of youth policies, youth research, and other aspects of youth in the member states of the European Community (EC). The goal is to provide a useful basis for further Community thinking on youth matters. Section 1 of the report depicts central aspects of youth across the EC. The aim is to demonstrate how young people's lives are framed by the social, economic, political, and cultural contexts in which children grow up. Sections 2 and 3 of the report examine the nature and direction of research concerning youth in the EC and offer proposals for change. In section 2, an initial working map of the EC's research and policy perspectives enables an assessment of the ways in which the EC Commission could promote a transnational approach to youth policy and research. Section 3 translates the assessment into a set of recommendations for EC policy. All of the recommendations seek to: (1) respond to themes identified in discussions with practitioners, policymakers, and researchers as important for the future; (2) take into account the range of experience and expertise available across the EC; and (3) develop the basis for a transnational tradition for for youth research and policy in Europe. Nineteen footnotes are included; an appendix and a bibliography containing 126 references are attached. (SG)

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Young people in the European Community :

Towards an agenda for research and policy

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Young people in the European Community :

Towards an agenda for research and policy

Report prepared by Lynne Chisholm and Jean-Marie Bergeret on behalf of the Commission of the European Communities Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth. This report does not necessarily represent the official position of the Commission or of the Member States.

June 1991

Acknowledgements

We extend our thanks to the national experts on Research into Youth Matters, who facilitated our meetings with policymakers, researchers and practitioners in the Member States. José Bergeret, Dieter Renz, Else Krüger, Nicole Phelouzat and Andreas Marquart were of invaluable assistance in the organisation of materials and production of the texts. The staff of the European Community Youth Exchange Bureau gave unstinting support in what was a hectic production schedule. We could not have completed this study on time without the help of all, for which we have been most grateful.

Young People in the European Community

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0. Introduction and Summary

0.1 Introduction

This report considers the character of youth policies, youth research and aspects of the youth phase in the Member States in order to provide a useful basis for further Community thinking on youth matters. It has been prepared in response to the request of the Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs for a 'snapshot' report on the situation of young people in the Community. (1) The report therefore comprises a strategic review of the present state of affairs across the Community. It is intended to provide an initial framework and basis for Member States seeking to establish co-operation links, despite diversities in perspectives, policies and practices on research into youth matters.

The report is structured in two major parts. The first part (section 1) depicts central aspects of the youth phase across the Community in order to illustrate diversities and disparities, parallels and common factors. In other words, how are young people's lives framed by the social, economic, political and cultural contexts in which they grow up in the Community? With a view to the future, how can we begin to speak usefully - if at all - of 'young Europeans' as a socially meaningful category of Community citizens? This first section does not set out to provide a comprehensive account of the situations of young Europeans. (This would not, at present, be possible.) It is an illustrative account, using statistical data from Eurostat and similar comparative sources, the findings of the Young Europeans surveys, and background information from the youth research literature. Our account is illustrative in two senses. Firstly, it indicates how key steps of the transition to adulthood are patterned across the Community, placing these patterns in a context of social change. Secondly, it suggests the directions in which youth research in the Community should move during the coming decade, if we are to develop transnational research and policy perspectives.

In focussing upon youth in society, it is more profitable not to regard young people as an object of concern and anxiety, but rather simply as a distinct social group with particular characteristics and particular needs. Young Europeans certainly experience problems of varying kinds and intensities in the transition to adult life. This does not mean that young people themselves are a 'problem', although this has frequently been the underlying approach of much youth policy and youth research. On the contrary, we should consider the ways in which established pathways to adulthood pose problems *for* young people. These pathways are defined and prescribed for young people by adults, by social and economic circumstances, by social institutions, by civil legislation and by social policies. Both as

individuals and as a group, young people are a 'problem' when they do not or cannot 'successfully' negotiate established and socially approved pathways to adulthood. For example, all too frequently, official and public responses to high rates of youth unemployment since the late 1970s have been coloured by the view that young people themselves are in some way responsible for the situation - and for changing it (through acquiring more education and training qualifications, etc.). At the same time, of course, young people are not passive victims of social and economic circumstance. They equally construct for themselves personal and generational identities, life styles, orientations and life plans. These aspects of the situations of young Europeans are at least as interesting as are the patterns of social circumstances that frame their lives, but it is here that appropriate material is scarcest.

The second part of the report (sections 2 and 3) provides an account of the natures and directions taken by youth policy and youth research in the Member States, followed by a set of proposals for the future. This is based upon a series of meetings held with policymakers, researchers and practitioners concerned with youth affairs in each of the twelve Member States (2). Section 2 therefore summarises and analyses the range of policy perspectives and research traditions as these currently exist across the Community. Our approach is integrative rather than additive. In other words, the account moves beyond offering twelve separate descriptions of youth research and policy. Instead, it places the available information into a more general framework of characteristics. Member States' policies and research are differently positioned within this framework. In essence, we have attempted to provide an initial working map of research and policy perspectives in the European Community. This enables an assessment of the ways in which the Commission could assist co-operation and foster a transnational approach to youth policy and youth research in the future.

Section 3 translates this assessment into a set of recommendations for Community action. Some of these recommendations can be readily incorporated into existing programmes and initiatives. Others imply an expansion of Commission engagement in youth affairs, particularly in facilitating larger scale and longer term projects. All the recommendations included here were designed with three main criteria in mind. Firstly, they respond to the themes identified in discussion with practitioners, policymakers and researchers as important for the future. Secondly, they take into account the range of experience and expertise available across the Community. Thirdly, they are directed towards developing the basis of a transnational tradition for youth research and policy in Europe. Increasing rates of geographical mobility, a polarisation of social circumstances and a pluralisation of lifestyles and values are key issues for the European Community in the coming decades. Young people will be very much affected by these developments: they will be those most subject to new expectations and demands. Young people are equally those who will need to find a secure foothold in a rapidly changing

and highly pluralist environment. We are convinced that youth research and policy must respond by moving forward into a new phase, one which can encompass these prospects both in theory and in practice. This is the message of our report.

0.2 Summary

The main points covered in this report are summarised immediately below.

1. The social construction of the youth phase

• The social construction of the youth phase has undergone considerable change across recent decades. These changes can be seen in aggregate statistics on family, work and education patterns. Fundamentally, the youth phase is becoming longer in duration and more fragmented in its sequencing. But the pace of change differs across the Community, and the direction of change is not necessarily unilinear or unidimensional. Rather, the Community presents us with complex patterns of similarities and differences which reflect cultural traditions and contemporary circumstances. It is these *patterns* which offer a basis for appreciating the situations of young people in the Community of today and the Europe of tomorrow. These patterns are not simply different from each other. Rather, young people growing up in different Community regions, social circumstances and cultural traditions find that the scales of risk and opportunity are weighted in very disparate ways. These imbalances are a matter for concern with respect to the task of building a social Europe.

• We lack accessible and useful sources of information for a detailed description and analysis of the situation of young people in the Community. Both aggregate statistics and small-scale qualitative studies are inadequate and imbalanced for the needs of a transnational, future-oriented, European-level youth research. Community action could help to rejuvenate youth research to respond appropriately to the challenges and changes of the coming years. In this context, researchers are aware that they lack the linguistic and cultural competence to conduct transnational studies and to make sense of research from other countries. Equally, young people's active participation in all matters that concern them, including research and action programmes, is desirable on two grounds. Firstly, democratic citizenry is best encouraged when young people 'have more say' in matters that directly concern them. Secondly, the quality of research and action outcomes is generally enhanced when their subjects are drawn into genuine engagement with the process.

2. A Community-wide perspective on youth policy and youth research

• There are considerable differences between Member States in the approaches they take and the priority they attach to youth policy. Nevertheless, (varying degrees of) dispersal of political and administrative responsibility for youth affairs is common to all countries. However, all Member States pay policy attention to the transition from education/training into the labour market; to programmes for prevention and protection of young people from social risks; and to youth information and guidance services of various kinds. National youth research profiles generally respond to national policy priorities. In this sense, research follows funding. Beyond this, some national research communities have a well developed tradition of ethnographic and cultural studies of specific groups of young people. Such studies are less heavily dependent upon policy and funding priorities than are large scale surveys. Contemporary youth research also increasingly places importance upon links with practitioners and upon action programmes on behalf of young people.

• National youth policy perspectives all embody a set of principles with corresponding strategies and practical objectives. (This remains the case for those Member States in which the formulation of youth policy as such is not a priority.) These principles, strategies and objectives are composed of varying mixtures of four elements: the progressive integration of youth as a social category into the concerns of the polity (*une politique horizontale; eine Querschnittspolitik*); social justice towards and solidarity with young people; encouraging active citizenship on the part of young people; and the integration of young people into the existing social order.

• The existence of a developed youth research literature or community is not necessarily contingent upon the shape and salience of youth policy in any given Member State. Rather, the critical factors include the availability of funding, an established research infrastructure and network, clientèles interested in youth research findings, and a well developed set of links with youth work/youth services practice (for example, via professional training programmes for practitioners). National approaches to the formulation and implementation of youth policy can and do significantly contribute to the degree to which these conditions are present; but other antecedents play a role, too. In addition, the absolute levels of resources available for youth research inevitably vary, not only with a country's general economic prosperity but also with its size and population base.

• The Commission of the European Community might assist in introducing a more even balance between the resources bases of the Member States; in encouraging research in areas less fully covered at national level; and in fostering policy-relevant, future-oriented, holistic youth research of concern

to all interested parties.

3. Pathways into the Future: Recommendations for Community Action

• These recommendations correspond to the interests, competences and specific experience of different and various Member States. They are also directed towards issues particularly relevant to and for young people in a post-1992 Europe.

• Technical projects

- The facilitation of communication between national youth research communities, including between national centres (*observatoires*) for those Member States that have such an institution;
- The development of appropriate and effective monitoring and evaluation tools for action programmes and initiatives directed at young people;
- A focussed study of the linguistic needs of the Community;
- A feasibility study for the founding of a regular publication Youth in Europe.

• Pedagogic projects

- The development of European training and qualification programmes for youth workers and educational/social work practitioners;
- Programmes to enhance the cultural competence of youth researchers;
- In the context of a 'new Europe', intensified action initiatives to encourage the social and political participation of young people in their own communities and transnationally (for example, enhancement of the Community's Youth for Europe scheme).

• Research projects

(To be conducted on a transnational basis)

- The evolution of the situation of young people in Europe:
  - the emergence of 'postmodern' youth values and lifestyles;
  - the changing relations between the sexes;
  - the formation and implications of national, regional and 'European' identities.

- The interrelationships between social inequalities and im/mobility:
  - regional disparities and the heterogeneity of 'European youth';
  - involuntary emigration of young people;
  - patterns of internal/regional/rural-urban migration of young people;
  - trajectories of marginalisation and exclusion which intensify processes of social polarisation and exposure to social risk.

1. The Social Construction of the Youth Phase

1.1 Introduction

In everyday life, the terms 'youth' and 'young people' inevitably acquire a seeming naturalness that, on closer inspection, they do not possess. Age and sex, transformed into the social categories of life cycle and gender, are the oldest established bases of different social roles, functions and statuses. In other words, societies allot different tasks and positions to the young and the old(er), just as they do for women and men. This 'division of labour' is not the same in all societies, past or present. It can apply to a relatively small category of activities, or it may extend to all areas of social life. The boundaries between age-linked or gender-appropriate tasks areas may be strongly drawn, or they may be quite weak (so that in practice people often do the 'inappropriate' without remark). But there is usually some sort of division of labour, which derives, indirectly and partially, from social interpretations of the human life-cycle. Divisions of labour are generally accompanied by social hierarchies. Certain tasks, especially when they are allocated to certain social groups, are more highly valued and rewarded than are others. This is very clear for the division of labour by sex. In the case of age, the relevant interpretations are those which tell us what someone is physically, intellectually and socially capable of doing at given stages of life. In other words, we hold both common-sense and 'scientific' theories about maturation and learning processes. These processes are judged to follow trajectories across the life-span, although the course of a trajectory is not necessarily unilinear or unidirectional. Divisions of labour by age seem self-evident when we consider the case of the three year old in contrast to the thirty year old, or the eighteen year old compared with the eighty year old. But as with gender, there are few, and arguably no, inevitabilities about the ways societies and cultures understand and organise the life-cycle, especially once we discount its extremities. In fact, the social history of childhood - as in Philippe Ariés' classic study, Centuries of Childhood - shows us that our understandings and our practices are historically and culturally specific. Unlike a rose, a child is not necessarily a child.

Unsurprisingly, 'neighbouring' societies (in time, space and tradition) tend to share perspectives in many ways, including their understandings and practices about age divisions. It might well be possible to speak about contemporary 'European' life-cycle divisions, especially in the context of a comparison with other parts of the world. On the other hand, there are significant differences within Europe, too. For example, the boundaries between childhood, youth and adulthood are not similarly placed everywhere in the Community. These differences have complex cultural, political and economic origins, and it is not the task of this report to untangle them in detail. But they can and do

find their way into national approaches to youth policy, either as general principles or more explicitly as quasi-official definitions. These boundaries also exist, to some extent, in legal and administrative measures that specify such matters as the minimum age of criminal responsibility, the maximum age for receiving free dental care, the age at which one may sign a tenancy agreement, and so forth.

Some of these frequently subtle differences between Community countries were highlighted for us in the course of collecting information for the second part of this report. For example, in Danish society and culture, chronological age is de-emphasised as a determinant of social positioning; the social construction of identity is seen as a lifelong process. The boundaries between childhood, youth and adulthood are therefore blurred. Children and young people are, in principle, equally as much citizens as are adults. In policy terms, these ideas bring some advantages for young people, since they are expected to develop individual responsibility early on - but in the context of active social participation. In return, young people can legitimately claim social rights early on, too - for example, to subsidised independent public housing planned with their needs in mind (although this does not mean that their access to suitable accommodation is regarded as adequate by young Danes). On the other hand, since young people are not necessarily viewed as a sharply distinct social category, their particular needs are all too easily lost from view, especially when the pressure on public resources is great, as has been increasingly the case during the 1980s.

Greece also seems to 'overlook' young people: in the words of one researcher we met, young people are socially 'abandoned' during the period of youth transitions. The cultural context is quite different, however. The social transition to adulthood takes place abruptly (effectively, at marriage), but youth is not clearly distinguishable from childhood. Most young people remain highly dependent upon their parents for an extended period of time, until they are, quite literally, launched into adulthood by their families. A recent report writes, for example, that „the concept of housing problems of the young ... is unfamiliar in the Greek context ... On the other hand, there is universal recognition of the special housing problems of young *couples*. ... Living with the family and, more generally, being dependent on family support is part of the whole network of family relationships and the mutual obligations involved" (Emmanuel, 1987, pp. 1, 32). Clearly, the social construction of youth differs quite markedly between Denmark and Greece - which we might well have expected, given their divergent cultural traditions and social economies.

The United Kingdom and Denmark might be seen as rather closer cultural and economic neighbours; but here, too, clear differences emerge. Official British perspectives do not accord youth a distinct policy status: „In the UK, people are regarded as adults from the age of 18, when they can vote and

enter into legal contracts on their own initiative. The issues and problems which will affect people between the age of 18 and 25 will also affect people in other age groups. Even for those below 18 years of age, there is a very wide variety of different needs and interests and they are not a homogeneous group. For these reasons, the UK prefers to consider the problems of young people within the context of the needs of the population as a whole" (Research Into Youth Matters Group, UK statement, March 1991). As always, such accounts may not wholly accord with non-governmental views and actual social practices, but it remains interesting to note that the youth phase in the UK has not, so far, lengthened to the same degree as it has in neighbouring continental northwest European countries. All other things being equal, the onset of social adulthood takes place rather earlier in the UK, even where education and training are extended. Young people certainly exist, but, for the majority, youth is traditionally a rather shortlived status. It may nevertheless be a highly culturally creative and intense period of life, as shown in the production of youth (sub)cultures and youth styles, which has a particularly rich tradition in the UK.

In sum, the youth phase, in common with all life cycle stages, is something of a moving feast. For practical purposes, the Commission (though not each Member State) adheres to a definition which spans the 15 to 24 age group, but this is only an approximation of contemporary cultural understandings and social institutional arrangements. In fact, many youth researchers now argue that this definition should be extended to the age of 30, to take account of the lengthening of the youth phase in Europe. Definitions of life-cycle stages are, of course, inherently relative to each other, so that social changes which affect one stage automatically have implications for other stages. If we argue that the youth phase is lengthening at the upper end, then this inevitably raises questions about our understandings of adulthood. If we argue that children are 'growing up ever earlier', this ultimately implies a redefinition of childhood. For these reasons, we should not consider life-cycle stages in isolation from each other, but rather in relation to each other.

Similarly, the life-cycle and its constituent phases are dynamic processes, not discrete events. The integrity of social process is notoriously difficult to capture and to decode intelligently. Social life is simply a very 'busy' and constantly changing affair. In order to begin to grasp its meanings and its logic, we are compelled to simplify its scope and complexity. Metaphorically, we analyse snapshots rather than films. Time is sacrificed, so that the significance of processes in understanding social life is underexposed. This is particularly problematic when the focus of study *itself* is a trajectory, as in the case of the life-cycle. The youth phase is also a period in which a great deal occurs in a relatively compact slice of the life span. A broad view of youth would extend from transfer from primary to secondary schooling (at around the age of 12) through to 'settling down' occupationally and domestically

(by around the age of 30). The youth phase thus covers no more than about a quarter of a modern European life span, but many critical turning points - educationally, occupationally, domestically and personally - occur during this period. It is not surprising, then, to find that, compared with other age groups, young people are subject to high levels of social regulation. Young people are subject to many kinds of social control, both by the state (through educational and social policy) and by their families (through relations of dependence and authority). No society can survive, socially and economically, unless it manages to ensure that most young people become adults, who by definition assume the full palette of rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Sociologically speaking, the transition to adulthood is much too important to be left to its own devices, and „people *have* got to grow up" as Jenkins (1990, p.135) succintly remarks.

Under these circumstances, longitudinal studies and qualitative analyses are particularly appropriate for studying the youth phase. Longitudinal studies unlock the dimension of time/process. They allow us to follow the trajectories young people construct in making the transition to adulthood. Trajectories are a combination of what is *possible* within a given set of circumstances and what is *chosen* from a range of potential alternatives. Tracing the processes of occupational choice for a group of young people over a period of time, for example, shows not only when, but also *how* girls and boys gradually channel their aspirations and expectations into gender-appropriate channels. Strong institutional and structural barriers in vocational training systems and on the labour market continue to make it difficult for both sexes to cross occupational gender boundaries. In fact, by the time such decisions are taken, most young people will have come to prefer gender-appropriate jobs. Longitudinal studies can show the processes by which they arrive at these preferences - which young people generally say are genuine free choices on their part, but which for the most part are evidently not free choices. Cross-sectional studies cannot unlock these processes, since they have no access to the dimension of time beyond that offered through the selective retrospection of those studied.

Equally, the very complexity of these processes poses methodological problems that survey-type studies cannot alone resolve. Surveys are much better at eliciting fairly straightforward factual information, whereas the logic of social process is often neither straightforward nor factual in nature. Qualitative studies, on the other hand, do lend access to the multiple interrelations between choice and circumstance that underly trajectories. In particular, they can expose the meanings that people attach to their decisions and actions. Without such information, it is difficult to *make sense of* the patterns thrown up by surveys such as the Young Europeans studies.

However, longitudinal studies (such as the education-to-employment cohort surveys conducted by

CEREQ in Paris) are few, and at European level they are non-existent. Qualitative studies offer rich insights, but they are rarely readily culturally transferable as they stand. Qualitative studies seek to understand cultural contexts and behaviours *in their own terms* rather than through the perspective of the outsider. The task, then, is not usually one of making links with other cultures, within or beyond national borders. At the same time, the accounts produced from studies of groups within one's own society typically take considerable background knowledge of the cultural context for granted. For example, finding an apprenticeship, *any* apprenticeship, dominates the thoughts and actions of young West German 16 to 18 year old schoolleavers to an extraordinary extent. In one young man's words: „The main thing is that I get an apprenticeship, so that I don't end up on the street. ... The main thing is somehow to get some kind of apprenticeship" (quoted in Heinz, Krüger et al., 1985, p.87). A willingness to relinquish preferences altogether in favour of securing *a* job of any kind became endemic all over Europe by the mid-1980s, in the wake of high youth unemployment rates. Nevertheless, the intensity with which apprenticeships are sought in West Germany becomes understandable only within the context of an established compact between the social partners. This compact firmly governs the relationship between formal qualifications, occupational access and wage/benefit tarifs. Information deficits of this kind are not difficult to remedy once they are recognised, but many are much more difficult to recognise in the first place, especially when they have to do with deep-seated norms and values. It should now be clear that building a useful understanding of the situation of young people in the Community is anything but a simple exercise.

1.2 A European perspective for studying youth

Part One of the report considers the social, economic, political and cultural contexts in which young people grow up in the Community. The discussion is illustrative rather than exhaustive, and it is oriented towards building a positive and distinct perspective for European youth research and policy in the years to come. In other words, our purpose is to propose an agenda and to indicate how that agenda might be addressed. If it is important to monitor how contemporary European change *both* impacts upon *and* is presaged by young people's lives and perspectives, then a carefully planned programme of precisely targeted, in-depth and holistic studies is needed for the coming decade. Such studies are an essential complement to European-wide surveys of young people.

One central argument underlies this discussion. It is clear that the youth phase has undergone considerable change across the last three decades. It is equally clear that such changes have occurred, and are continuing to occur, at varying paces in the different Member States. More importantly, these

changes do not necessarily possess a unidimensional and unilinear character across the Community. Changes are taking place in different ways and in multiple directions. So, for example, current trends in the northern Community countries (*except* in France) indicate that young people are once more staying with their parents for longer than was the case a decade ago. In the southern European countries, most young people continue to live with their parents until they marry (unless they study at a university or college away from their home town). Average age at marriage is not necessarily lower in southern Europe (for example, in much of Italy) than in northern Europe; young people may still be living at home in their late twenties. Evidently, a unilinear notion that social modernisation and economic development encourage the earlier generational 'break-up' of family households is not tenable. Equally, it is impossible to make sense of trends in the process of leaving home without integrating other dimensions of the transition to adulthood (for example, marriage/cohabitation patterns). In effect, we are confronted with complex patterns of similarities and differences which, of course, reflect particular cultural traditions and particular sets of circumstances. It is the contrasts and interrelations between these complex patterns that open the way forward to a more integrated and transnational approach to the study of youth. Such an approach does not seek to establish homogeneity and convergence where there is none (beyond the statistical average 'EUR12'), but rather focusses on the *range* of situations in which young Europeans grow up.

In the first instance, then, it is the diversities in the circumstances and orientations of young people that should interest and concern us. These diversities reflect, on the one hand, continued marked inequalities in the distribution of life chances and risks between regions and social groups. For example, the Young Europeans surveys (1987 and 1990, p.59) show that one in three young EC-Europeans have never been abroad. The twelve Member States divide into three groups in this respect: the much travelled (in descending order: young Luxembourgers, Danes, Dutch, Belgians and Germans), the somewhat travelled (young Italians, Irish, British and French), and the little travelled (young Spanish, Portuguese and, least of all, young Greeks). Similarly, national educational systems have so far responded very differently to the process of European harmonisation. In France, Belgium, Denmark, The Netherlands and the ex-FRG at least 60% of the Young Europeans (1990, p.96) respondents reported that they had received some form of curriculum input on the subject of the Community. At the other end of the continuum, this was so for no more than one-third of the young Portuguese, British and Greeks surveyed. However, across the Community there is a polarisation of experience in these respects. Those who have never been abroad are more likely to be the young unemployed, those who completed their education before the age of 17, and those in difficult financial circumstances (ibid., p.62). These three groups overlap, of course; but they are by no means equally distributed across Community countries and regions, since both educational participation and unemployment rates also

vary considerably by country and region. Similarly, those most likely to have received some education about the EC, to have travelled abroad for at least a year, and to have participated in an organised exchange or youth group travel programme, are those who have continued their education to at least the age of 18 (ibid., pp.62,66,98). We know that post-compulsory educational participation rates are still linked to social origin. Young Europeans' chances of acquiring the experiences and resources they will increasingly need to participate fully in the new Europe are therefore still very unequally distributed. This is a central issue for the coming years: as one researcher commented to us, mobility should be about creating the conditions for people to pursue their own trajectories.

Diversities in young people's circumstances and orientations also point, on the other hand, to the variety of ways of life that make up the European cultural mosaic. The extent to which young people (and adults) participate in voluntary associations, clubs and similar organisations is a good example. The Young Europeans surveys confirm the marked differences between northern and southern Europe in this respect. The level of associationism amongst 15 to 24 year olds is high in Denmark, Luxembourg and in The Netherlands, middling in Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the UK, and low in Portugal, Greece, Spain, France and Italy (ibid., 1990, p.43). Usually, these differences are explained in terms of the greater availability of alternative forms of collective social participation in southern European cultures, i.e. stronger local community life and kinship interaction. This is undoubtedly so. But again, the relationships between associationism and kinship/community are complex; they are understandable only within the context of culturally specific ways of life.

In Ireland, for instance, to cite those with whom we discussed these issues, „community is the foundation" of social life and „the site for the solution of social problems." But in contrast with Denmark, where individualism is seen as *contingent upon* participation in the collectivity, Irish culture traditionally tends to place individualism and collectivity *in opposition to* each other. Maintaining community, however, is more important than fulfilling individual interests, as exemplified in the comment (made during the Dublin meetings) that „emigration is good for the individual and economically, but it's a bad idea socially, for the community ... Moving people [rather than jobs] is the recipe for the total destruction of the Irish social fabric." This is not a statement with which everyone would agree, but its orientation well represents cultural traditions. As far as Irish youth organisations are concerned, the emphasis lies firmly upon volunteer led and community based provision, and there is currently considerable concern about the fall-off in young people's participation rates. And yet, in European context, the young Irish are top of the league when it comes to self-reported active participation in youth clubs (45% of Young Europeans 1990 respondents [p.48]), despite the fact that the level of Irish associationism in general is not the highest (as noted above). In sum, in Ireland,

community is the very key to associationism. Neither does the strong position of family/kinship in Irish social life appear to detract from young people's involvement in organised youth activities.

A focus on relational patterns of similarities and differences such as these draws attention to the scale and sensitivity of the task of building a social Europe, in which the young are the key actors. Young people's attitudes towards the European Community, including attitudes towards prospective unification, have gradually become more positive across the last decade (as reported in Young Europeans1990, p.110). Nevertheless, there is as yet little sign that the growth of a European identity has gone beyond the level of wishful thinking (cf. Diskurs,1990). Again, it is the least well-educated and the unemployed who are much the most likely to offer *no opinion at all* on the matter of whether they think they know enough about the EC and whether they would like to know more (ibid., p.100).

Envisaging and fostering the growth of a European identity and polity which enriches (but does not seek to replace) regional, ethnic-cultural or national affiliation demands a real commitment to promoting equality, social justice and intercultural understanding. Current trends across the Community are not encouraging in these respects. Processes of social polarisation are, by all accounts, intensifying rather than weakening. So, for example, inequalities of educational opportunities remain very strong in the ex-FRG, despite the reforms of the 1960s/1970s - which have largely benefited girls, especially those from better placed homes. „In certain regions of West Germany 60% of an age-group attend the thirteenth grade ... whereas in other regions ... not even 10% of an age-group [do so]. ... Even today some [young people] have virtually no opportunity at all of attending university ... in particular in certain rural areas. ... Large cities ... have not only the highest rates of educational participation among young people, but simultaneously the highest rates of [unqualified schoolleavers]" (Bertram,1990, pp.5-6). In the case of Italy, Cavalli (1991, p.290) remarks that the social disparities between southern and northern Italy observable at the time of national unification 130 years ago have by no means weakened. On the contrary, they have intensified.

When circumstances of life are not only qualitatively different but also sharply unequal, increased contact between differently placed individuals is more likely to produce mutual rejection and conflict rather than mutual respect and co-operation. This is a critical factor in prompting inter-ethnic conflict and, concretely, in the renewed upsurge of sharply discriminatory attitudes and behaviour amongst young people in many European countries and regions. At the time of writing, the conflict between disadvantaged French indigenous youth, les magrhébines, the police and the local communities in the Paris banlieues has reached extremely serious proportions. The collapse of the eastern European socialist bloc and the process of German unification also offer us sobering examples. Kruse (1991)

reports on the mutual hostility between cliques from east and west Berlin, a relatively mild manifestation of prejudice in comparison with the widely reported outbreaks of violence by neofascist youth cliques against non-whites and non-Europeans in the ex-GDR.

Young eastern Germans not only have to cope with disorientation following the utter collapse of the world in which they grew up, but they are increasingly confronted with sharp social and economic differences between eastern and western Germany. These differences now place them in a much more precarious situation for realising their hopes and plans. In absolute terms, many young Europeans from economically disadvantaged regions elsewhere are in a much less favourable situation than young eastern Germans. The problem lies rather in the rapidity of change, the clarity of the boundary line between the more and the less privileged, and the effects of isolationism upon orientations towards the unfamiliar. The Young Europeans 1990 (p.22) survey data (3) on young people's 'centres of interest' finds, not surprisingly, that 30% of ex-GDR respondents state an interest in national politics, the highest proportion of all Community countries at present (and markedly higher than for ex-FRG respondents). But whilst young people from both parts of Germany show comparable levels of interest in ecology (high), in the peace movement (above average) and in social problems (below average), they differ noticeably in their levels of interest in the Third World. Only 12% of young eastern Germans state an interest in this topic, the lowest figure in the Community. Young eastern Germans also have least interest in life in other countries, in sharp contrast to the high degree of interest indicated by western German youth. The same picture is repeated for interest in the regional life of one's own country.

It might be argued that interest in life beyond one's own region is fuelled by the experience of travelling elsewhere, and that here young eastern Germans have been particularly disadvantaged. However, travel within eastern Europe (and to non-European state socialist countries) was not uncommon. Also, whilst Greece and Portugal are both 'little travelled' nations (as noted earlier), their young people state a high level of interest in life elsewhere, both within and beyond their countries' borders. The rising interest shown by young Portuguese between 1987 and 1990 is quite extraordinary in scale (from 22% to 40% for other countries; from 16% to 31% for national regions; ibid., 1987 p.29, 1990 p.22). It is clearly associated with accession to the European Community, rapid modernisation, and an optimism of outlook on the future which is confirmed throughout the pattern of Portuguese youth's responses to the questions posed by the Young Europeans survey. This dynamism extends to Portugal's approach towards youth policy as well (cf. Part 2 of the report). We might also speculate that both historical and contemporary features of Greek and Portuguese societies favour a more open outlook on the 'world beyond.' Both countries have strong trading and exploring traditions, and both are today important European tourist regions.

There remains much more to investigate and understand in this connection. However, if young Europeans are expected to develop cosmopolitan orientations and skills in order to contribute to and participate in an economically prosperous, socially harmonious and polycultural future, then it is evident that coherent and co-ordinated policies are required that create a climate of positive access, opportunity, support and personal autonomy. In order to develop such policies, we need to have a clearer idea of the differences between young Europeans' situations. This is the path we have chosen to follow in this report.

1.3 Youth transitions in the European Community. Patterns of convergence and divergence

The youth phase can be viewed as a series of interrelated transitions between childhood and adulthood. These steps centrally and traditionally include the acquisition of skills and qualifications, finding employment, setting up an independent household, entering a longer term relationship through cohabitation or marriage, and having one's own children. These steps are only imperfectly and partially represented in aggregate comparative statistics, but we have no practical alternative than to begin here at present. Such data, however imperfectly, can and do show the extent of diversity across the Community in the ways these steps fit together. (4)

The social milestones of the youth transitions process relate to three major spheres of social life: education, work and family. These spheres are each highly socially instutionalised, i.e. they are governed by long established norms and practices, many of which have an explicitly formalised, even legalised, character. One example is parents' obligation to send their children to school from and until a given age (or, in some countries, to provide them with an alternative form of education approved by the relevant authorities). Another example is the strength of ideas about the family which inform attitudes and social policies, but which do not match today's realities. Whilst the heterosexual, married (once only) two-parent-plus-child(ren) family no longer comprises the majority of private households in much of Europe, it still holds a central place in official and popular images of the desirable and the proper.

For youth transitions, the educational milestones are the acquisition of recognised skills and formal qualifications. In the work sphere, they involve deciding upon an occupational field and finding employment. Family milestones comprise setting up an independent household, entering a longer term relationship through marriage/cohabitation, and having one's own children. Traditionally, it was (and in many ways, still is) expected that these milestones were to be passed in the order listed here,

although in practice this was not necessarily what happened. Some social groups 'accomplished' the sequence earlier and more quickly, but were faced with more risks or obstacles in doing so. For example, for those growing up in poorer circumstances in the industrial cities, schooling finished early and with few or no formal qualifications. Employment of some kind frequently began before the end of schooling. Marriage and children followed within a few short years. Obstacles to gaining educational qualifications above the minimum were generally insurmountable, labour market risks high, marriage the only route to household and sexual independence, children an unpredictable inevitability. For many, circumstances have improved immeasurably since the watershed of the Second World War. Nevertheless, we should be under no illusion: for those 'left behind', matters have little improved. Inner London comprehensive school pupils from socially deprived backgrounds during the 1980s are an example of Europe's forgotten youth (cf. Chisholm,1990a). They belong to the 'isolated and immobile' group of young Europeans identified by Paul-Kohlhoff (1990) in the rural areas of southern Europe. Such young people cannot find employment locally or elsewhere, since their local economies are weak and they themselves poorly educationally qualified.

In fact, the 'ideal-typical' sequence of youth transitions is predicated upon the majority practices of a minority: those of indigenous young men, from at least middle level socio-economic backgrounds, in Euro-American urbanised societies and advanced industrial economies. This is readily observable in the way *curriculum vitae* are typically evaluated by potential employers. Periods of education, 'relevant' experience and employment are expected to comprise a continuous ascending succession 'onwards and upwards'; interim milestones should have been passed by a given age, etc. But the opportunities and the motivation for producing such a trajectory are not evenly distributed. This is a problematic issue for people of all ages. However, the consequences of a 'non-conforming' trajectory are especially harsh and difficult to roll back in the case of young people trying to establish a positive identity and a secure future.

It may be generational circumstances that trip up many who would otherwise have produced a socially approved *curriculum vitae*, as in the case of the age cohorts hit hardest by youth unemployment since the late 1970s. The oldest of these groups, often termed the 'lost generations', are now reaching, or have passed beyond, the end of the youth phase, but their circumstances remain precarious well into adulthood. On the other hand, young people may resist conforming to the expectations of work-centred society, especially where they are also committed to postmodern values that emphasise self-actualisation and intrinsic engagement. The consequences of resistance can be severe: „To make progress means to be committed to one's work, to expend one's energies in one's job. ... But the price is high - career success is paid for by the impoverishment of self-identity. ... If a person refuses to be

coerced by the dictates of a work-centred society, s/he risks social marginalisation. ... 'Then I will be a nothing, nobody'. ... It is like being between Scylla and Charybdis" (Zoll et al., 1989, p.225).

We know that in real life, people's lives do not exactly correspond to the aggregate images that are produced both by statistical descriptions and by generalisations. This is not, in itself, the problem, since characteristic trajectories certainly do exist and are indispensable for understanding the social situations of young Europeans. The difficulty lies in the complexity of the European cultural mosaic and in the inevitable flatness of numbers. (5) Nevertheless, even simple numerical representations of complex realities do make it clear that an ideal-typical youth transitions sequence is not tenable as a guide to the situations of young Europeans. In other words, we cannot usefully speak of 'European youth' as a unitary social group. We can, nevertheless, make some general points about the way in which the youth phase in Europe is lengthening. The following sub-sections take this as a starting-point, then move on to illustrate the diversities in young Europeans' situations in the spheres of family, work and education.

1.3.1 Extension of the youth phase

A broad consensus amongst youth researchers takes the view that the youth phase has become longer in duration, is now dominated by schooling rather than employment, and that the steps of transition to adulthood no longer follow the established sequencing of the past. A recent overview of nine national studies (6) on young Europeans and the urban environment concludes that the „general impression is that the temporal connections between the completion of education, marriage/ cohabitation, leaving home and entering the labour market have become more diverse and for some young people, more problematic" (Burton et al.,1989, p.26). The report from the West German study in this series observes, for instance, that there is no „close connection between completing education and beginning work; between leaving home and marriage or between marriage and having children" (Jablonka et al., 1988, p.4; cited in Burton et al., op.cit.). In Italy, there are „many young people who start working while continuing to study, and many who, although they have already started working, continue with their education, albeit with delays" (Di Palma et al., 1987, p.4; cited in Burton et al., op.cit.).

In this sense, youth transitions may be seen as subject to a certain *destandardisation* and simultaneous *stretching*. In social terms, young people remain younger for longer, at least in comparison with the recent past. Whether it is now possible to speak of a new life phase (termed 'post-adolescence' in the

youth research literature) is a moot point. But it is reasonable to conclude that these changes created more space in which young people could develop their own, autonomous forms of cultural expression together with norms and values distinct from those of adult society. (7) However, extension and destandardisation of the youth phase are also accompanied not only by expanded opportunities for choice and formulation of one's own lifeplan, but equally by an intensification of associated risks of failure to negotiate transitions 'successfully' in personal and social terms. (8)

Social risks have never been equally distributed, of course. Some groups of young people have always had opportunities for choice; for some, however poorly they performed educationally, doors to a secure future stayed open. Others were loaded down with risks and insecurities whatever they did. Paradoxically, such inequalities seem more firmly fixed than ever, but, given this backdrop, there are three key points to make about young people's situation today. Firstly, difficulties in negotiating youth transitions successfully are experienced and regarded as evidence of *personal* inadequacy. Secondly, in the light of a highly competitive and individualised society, almost *everyone* is at risk of failure, especially since all are encouraged to strive to their utmost to realise their full potential.

Thirdly, an *ever wider range* of activities and potential competences are drawn into an intense search both for self-actualisation and for 'hard currency' on the transitions market. For example, the process of credential inflation, in which the labour market value of a given educational qualification type or level declines, reflects the competitive character of youth transitions. In France, the devaluation effect is currently particularly marked for short occupational diploma courses, i.e. in the lower-middle qualification range, above minimum leaving certificates but below the baccalauréat. Schoolleavers at this level increasingly find unskilled work rather than skilled manual or clerical employment. Both the social demand for education and young people's aspirations have never been higher, but investment in formal education shows an ever declining return (Galland, 1987; Lagree and Lew Fai, n.d.; cited in Bauer and Cuzon, 1987). The emergence of West German children's 'leisure careers' as described by Büchner (1990) is an example of the expansion of the credentials search, in which out-of-school activities such as sport, music and performance media play an increasing role. Participation and achievement in these activities can be used as markers of status and competence later on. Making effective use of these opportunities implies starting early on in childhood and results in packed 'leisure timetables'. By the time they reach adolescence, many young people are accustomed to the feeling that *they have no time*. Paradoxically, such intensified instrumentalism leads to an intensified search for intrinsic, self-actualising values - through the self-same activities. A recent study of young Danish amateur videomakers concluded that their main purpose was to create a *space for free play*. The most attractive leisure activities (aesthetic expression and sports) are those which seem to offer an escape

from reality pressure at school, at home and at work (Drotner,1990).

High rates of youth unemployment in the 1980s have left a social legacy for those growing up in the 1990s, notwithstanding the improvements that are foreseen in some (*not* all) Community countries due to declining cohort sizes and better employment prospects for young people. An expansion and reform of education and training provision has been the main policy response to youth unemployment and to structural shifts in labour market demand. Young people are now obliged, either formally or for all practical purposes, to continue their schooling and to undertake vocational courses for distinctly longer. The Young Europeans (1987) survey found that, on average, respondents had continued their education/training for two years beyond the age at which compulsory schooling ended *in their country*. The proportion of young people who had terminated their education at 14 or earlier (9%) was markedly lower than for the parallel Eurobarometer respondents who had grown up in the late 1970s (16%), and very much lower indeed than for those who were young in the late 1960s (38%; ibid., p.122). There seems little question that young Europeans everywhere will continue to extend their education/training and to expand and raise the level of their competences.

Increased rates of extended educational participation combined with cutbacks in public expenditure and social benefits during the 1980s are producing different patterns of dependence/independence between parents and their offspring. In southern Europe the family has never ceased to be the main source of financial and social support for young people; in northern Europe, it is regaining greater importance as part of the drift away from the welfare state. At the same time, the balance of education/training provision is shifting towards a market-oriented model in which self-funding plays a larger role. A comparison of young people's financial circumstances as shown in the Young Europeans 1987 and 1990 data confirms both trends. 15-19 year olds, whether employed or still studying full-time, increasingly rely on their families as a regular source of income. (For those who are employed, of course, parents are not necessarily the main source, but are rather a necessary supplementary source.) 20-24 year olds in full-time study are now less likely to be receiving training grants, and more likely to be securing their income by casual employment alongside their studies (ibid., p.16).

Young people today must be much more careful about formulating their plans and taking decisions, and they must weigh up closely the benefits and risks of particular courses of action. The paradox of contemporary youth entails a wider range of opportunities and experiences from which young people are invited and expected to select, combined with a higher risk of failure to meet rising certification/skill demands and a *widening gap* between those who succeed and those who will not or cannot do so. The success with which young people negotiate transitions milestones at their first attempt still

generally sets the course of their future lives. We continue to waste much human potential by making 'second chance' educational participation difficult for those who trip up. Yet there is widespread recognition that lifelong cycles of education and training are more appropriate for the demands of the future. Studies of the links between educational achievement and social opportunity/risk unfailingly suggest that social polarisation is increasingly fuelled by educational polarisation; this view was repeated consistently in the discussions we held with youth researchers across the Community.

There is a certain similarity, arguably a convergence, in young Europeans' situations when we focus on the broad issues of extension of the youth phase, individualisation processes and social polarisation. However, the ways in which these overall trends are manifested in specific regions and for specific groups are quite diverse. All the available evidence shows, for example, that ethnicity, gender and socio-economic background continue to produce characteristic patterns of youth transitions. These factors, together with those of cultural tradition, social geography and economic development/ prosperity, structure and contextualise young Europeans' positionings vis à vis each other. In particular, they place groups of young people in differentially advantaged 'starting boxes' to respond to the demands and opportunities presented by the European Community post-1992. It is to the illustrative description of these starting boxes that we now turn.

1.3.2 Household and family formation

Leaving the parental home and establishing an independent household is a process. Young people may move away and return several times and for differing reasons before the word 'home' no longer means 'where my parents live'. The point at which this process begins, the reasons for initially leaving and the time it takes before departure is final vary widely across the Community. At the same time, the kinds of households in which young people grow up and which they themselves establish are generally changing across Europe, but from very different starting points.

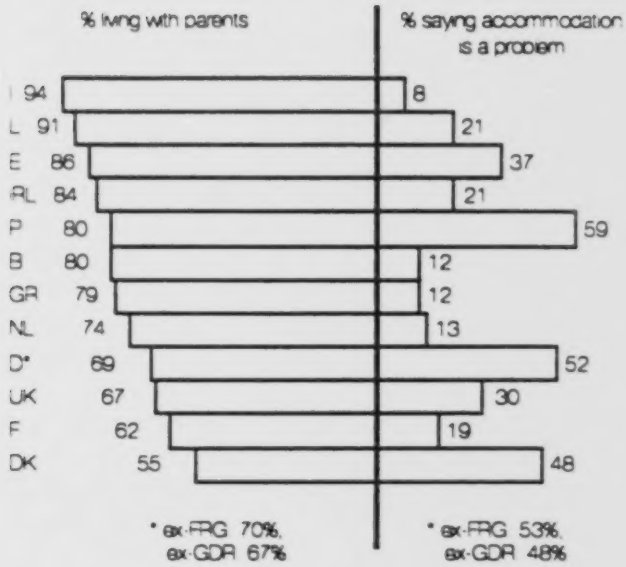
The 1987 Young Europeans survey showed (pp.3-4) that almost all 15 year olds live with their parents. By the age of 24 only 37% of young women and half of young men do so. Young women leave home in greater numbers and earlier than do young men. The proportion of young women living with their parents drops sharply after the age of 18, whereas the comparable age for young men is 21 (Young Europeans, 1990, p.5). This is partly because women still tend to marry younger, but also because they simply prefer to live independently. Gender-linked socialisation means that young women acquire greater skills in running a household, whereas young men are happier to enjoy the home comforts that

their parents, especially mothers, provide. For the most part, parents still place rather more constraints on daughters' than on sons' movements and activities, although the extent to which this is so varies greatly. On the whole, young women have more to gain and less to lose by leaving home, assuming that they can afford to do so.

However, young people's financial situation deteriorated during the 1980s. Housing markets in most of Europe also became tighter, in particular for the rental sector. Young people's access to independent accommodation has suffered, especially if they are single and childless, since targeted housing policies prioritise families (Burton et al., op.cit., pp.14-15). The proportion of 15-24 year olds living with their parents thus increased across the decade (from 70% to 75%; Young Europeans,1990, p.5). At the same time, it would appear that those who are already socially and educationally disadvantaged are also those most likely to leave home earliest and to occupy the poorest accommodation (for example, see: Burton et al., op.cit.; Christophersen, 1991; O'Mahony, 1988).

This overall picture masks two important issues: the enormous range of variation across the Community; and underlying trends away from marriage and towards cohabitation or living alone. In Italy, Luxembourg, Spain and Ireland, the leaving process begins much later; in Denmark, much earlier. A Copenhagen gymnasium headteacher we spoke with estimated that one-third of the 16-18 year olds at his school already live independently. Housing policies play an important role here. According to the Young Europeans data, the proportion of young Danish people living with their parents did not begin to rise until after 1987 (in contrast with elsewhere in the Community, except for The Netherlands). This proportion increased from 48% to 55% in 1990, though young Danes are still by far the least likely of all young Europeans to live with their parents. Concomitantly, between 1987-1990 the proportion of those living alone dropped noticeably in Denmark (from 26% to 21%), whereas elsewhere in the Community figures changed only slightly (except in France, cf. below, p.25).

Young people's *perceptions* of their situation are not drawn directly from their actual circumstances, however (see Table 1 overleaf). Young Danes place relatively greater importance on lack of suitable accommodation than do young Europeans whose objective level of access to independent housing is very much lower, as in the case in Luxembourg, where owner-occupation strongly dominates provision and policy (cf. Young Europeans 1990, p.38). At our Luxembourg meetings, it was somewhat ruefully remarked that affluence is the national social problem. Paradoxically, it is this very affluence that delays young people's transition to independent living, but equally, most young Luxembourgers *themselves* do not judge this a problem (ibid.). Presumably, the majority enjoy a comfortable standard and quality of life in the parental home until they can finance good independent accommodation.



Source adapted from Young Europeans 1990, Tables 1.3 and 2.3

Table 1 Young Europeans' Living Arrangements and Perception of Accommodation as a Problem, 1990

Overall, Table 1 suggests that there is no straightforward relationship between young people's living arrangements and their perception of accommodation as a problem. This is illustrated by the contrast between Portugal and Belgium, where equally high percentages of young people live with their parents. Accommodation is regarded as a problem by many young Portuguese, but by few young Belgians. In Portugal, living conditions are typically poorer than in Belgium. Young people undoubtedly have less privacy; the parental home is less comfortably equipped. Parents may still be inclined to uphold traditional values and styles of upbringing, whereas young people desire greater personal freedom and support 'modern' ways of life. All these features tend to push young people towards leaving home, but their financial situation and the housing market conspire to keep them there.

Cultural values are important in shaping living arrangements and young people's satisfaction with their situation. In Italy, fully 94% of 15-24 year olds currently live with their parents. This has always been a characteristic feature of Italian society. Yet few young Italians are seriously dissatisfied with their living arrangements. They place the family at the top of their hierarchy of values, regarding it as a centre of solidarity and reassurance. Very few indeed judge access to suitable accommodation as a problem (Cavalli et al., 1984; Young Europeans 1990, p.38). Of all young Europeans, Italians are those most likely to give family-related reasons for not going abroad to study, train or work. They fear homesickness and their families do not want them to go (ibid., p.74). It is undoubtedly the case that access to independent living is experienced as a problem by some groups of young Italians, for example, those whose relationships with their parents are highly conflictual. Such young people find themselves with few sources of extra-familial support, and access to alternative living arrangements is very restricted (Di Palma et al., op.cit., pp.36-7).

Declining marriage rates and rising numbers of young one-person households also offer pointers to changing lifestyles and values. In the majority of Member States (exceptions: Spain, Ireland and Portugal), average household size has declined, so that small households now exceed large ones. In Denmark, almost two-thirds of all households are one-person, and only 2% have more than five members. In contrast, a quarter of Spanish households have at least five members; only a tenth are one-person households (Eurostat, Basic Statistics 1990, p.111). The majority of young Europeans are therefore more likely to grow up in smaller families, and most will come to do so in the medium term future. In turn, more young people are choosing to live alone for a longer period of time before they form a joint household as part of a stable couple partnership. Only a tiny minority live in shared non-family households (1990: between 2% and 7%). Not all will have chosen to do so. Many cannot afford otherwise. But there are clear indications that living *alone* is an increasingly popular choice *where opportunities to do so become available.*

We have noted that the 1980s saw a rising proportion of young people living with their parents. The decade also saw an increase in the proportion of young Europeans living alone, despite deteriorating housing markets and financial circumstances. In 1982 5% of young Europeans lived alone, by 1987 8%. Since then, figures for the individual Member States have stagnated or declined - with the striking exception of France. In stark contrast to the trends elsewhere, the proportion of young French people living with their parents has dropped from 75% in 1987 to 62% in 1990. In parallel, the proportion of those cohabiting has jumped from 4% to 14%, and those living alone from 6% to 16% (Young Europeans,1990, p.8). French opinion surveys from the early 1980s found that, given the choice, over four-fifths of 15 to 20 year olds would prefer to live away from their parents (Godard and Bloess, 1986). Assuming that the Young Europeans figures are reliable, opportunities to move away rose at the end of the decade. Living alone will probably become a more widespread lifestyle option in the future, but it is unlikely to become a long term or characteristic arrangement for more than a minority, i.e. educated, highly mobile and financially comfortable young Europeans. It may well become one of the features of a 'cosmopolitan Euro-yuppie' culture, superimposed upon national traditions and circumstances.

Changes in marriage and family building patterns are more relevant for the majority of young people. These show that during the 1980s young Europeans in general shifted away from marriage towards cohabitation. By 1990 a higher proportion (7%) were cohabiting than were living with a spouse (6%). This is very different from the position in 1982 (5% cohabiting, 13% living with a spouse; Young Europeans, 1990, p.5). The rise in the proportion of 23/24 year old women living with their parents across the same period is remarkable: from 21% in 1982 to 37% in 1987 (Young Europeans, 1987, p.4; no comparable figure for 1990). On the one hand, young women's participation rates in further and higher education continue to rise everywhere in Europe. Young women are traditionally more likely to study nearer to home than young men. This counterbalances the overall tendency for young women to move away from home earlier, since young people who continue their education remain financially dependent upon their parents for longer. On the other hand, marriage rates declined in the 1980s in most Community countries, and women's age at the birth of their first child is rising. These trends mean that more young women stay single and childless for longer, instead of marrying and living with their husband.

Marriage and family building patterns and trends are highly complex. For the purposes of this report, we illustrate some of the central relationships and diversities across Europe in Table 2 (overleaf). The average ages at which young people marry for the first time differ considerably across Member States. They are highest for both sexes in Denmark, lowest for Greek women and for Portuguese men.

	Marriage rate/000	Age at marriage		Birth rate /000	% living as a couple*
		Male	Female		
UK	7.0	24.2	26.4	13.6	19
GR	6.6	23.2	27.7	10.6	10
P	6.6	23.8	25.9	12.0	13
FRG•	6.2	25.2	27.7	10.5	13
DK	6.1	26.8	29.4	11.0	19
NL	6.0	25.0	27.2	12.7	15
B	5.7	23.8	26.1	11.9	12
L	5.3	24.6	26.6	11.4	5
I	5.3	24.9	27.9	9.8	3
E	5.3	24.5	26.7	10.8	8
IRL	5.1	25.5	27.5	16.6	8
F	4.8	24.9	27.0	13.8	19

* 15-24 year olds, 1990 (Young Europeans).
All other figures: 1987 (marriage age E, 1985)

• ex-GDR marriage rate 8.5, living as a couple 24%, of whom 15% married

Sources: Statistisches Bundesamt, Bevölkerung und Erwerbstatigkeit Fachserie 1 Reihe 1, Wiesbaden 1987; Eurostat Demographic Statistics 1990, Eurostat Basic Statistics of the Community 27th edn 1990, Young Europeans 1990, Table 1.3

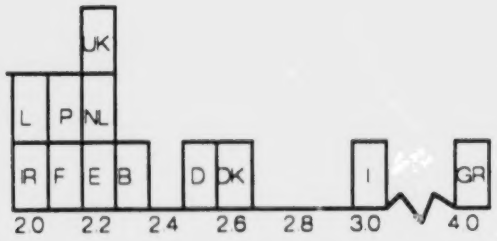
Table 2 Marriage, fertility and family building in the Member States, 1987 and 1990

In fact, average age at first marriage for men everywhere, and for women in Denmark, Ireland, the FRG, The Netherlands, Italy and France, now falls beyond the upper age limit of the Community definition of young people. (9) In 1970, with the exception of Ireland, it was the northern Community countries where people married youngest. Now the balance has shifted in the other direction (whereby in the UK and, especially, Belgium, people continue to marry at a relatively early age).

To some degree, these shifts are connected with social and economic modernisation processes, but cultural factors play an independent role too. In Ireland, age at marriage was always relatively high, marriage rates low, and cohabitation remains a very marginal option. (Of the 8% of young Irish living as a couple in 1990, only 1% were cohabiting.) A poor and agriculturally dominated economy, the strength of Catholicism, and high rates of emigration are important explanatory factors here (see NESC,1991). In Denmark, people may marry later than elsewhere in the Community, but they are likely to cohabit first: 19% of young Europeans in Denmark were living as a couple in 1990, but only 1% of these were married. It is in Denmark, too, that we see the clearest example of a pattern in which it is the arrival of a child that prompts the formalisation of cohabitation, i.e. marriage (cf. Table 5 below, p. 30).

Yet there are some virtual constants across the Community. The average age at marriage is not only higher for men than for women in all countries, but the gap is remarkably similar in most cases, as shown in Table 3 (overleaf). Men are on average two to two and a half years older than women when they marry for the first time. This homogeneity suggests that our ideas and practices about gender relations are deeply rooted in European cultural value systems. The larger gaps for Italy and, especially, Greece are particularly interesting in this respect. The delaying effect of military service for young men cannot alone account for the difference, since young men elsewhere are in similar positions. Emmanuel's study of young Greeks' living circumstances is equally puzzled by young men's situation: „It is young men in the 20-24 age group that show, at first glance, a surprisingly limited involvement with the labour market. Does this ... indicate restricted [labour market] opportunities? Nearly 60% of the young men in this group ... were not seeking employment. A large part of this can be accounted for by other legitimate full-time activities: studying and the army. ... [But] there is some hard evidence that ... [as many as] one fifth remain in some sense 'idle'" (op.cit., p.10). A period of 'care-less' freedom may be an established stage in the transition to male adulthood in Greek society, before they take on the responsibility of husband-father in their later twenties (cf. Philippopoulou and Tselikas, 1991).

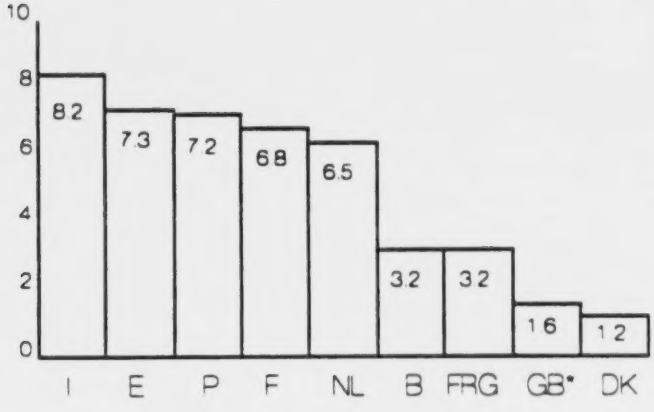
Marriage rates fell everywhere in Europe between 1960 and 1980 (at differing rates and points in time). During the 1980s, however, marriage rates have begun to rise again in three countries: very slightly in



The values represent the gap between average age at marriage by sex: the female value is subtracted from the male value, which is in all cases higher (see Table 2 columns 2 and 3)

Source: Eurostat Demographic Statistics 1990 Table F-5 (amended)

Table 3: Age at first marriage by sex by country. Difference between values by sex, 1987



* with Northern Ireland (i.e. UK): 5.7

There are no internal regions in Eurostat statistics for IRL, GR and L

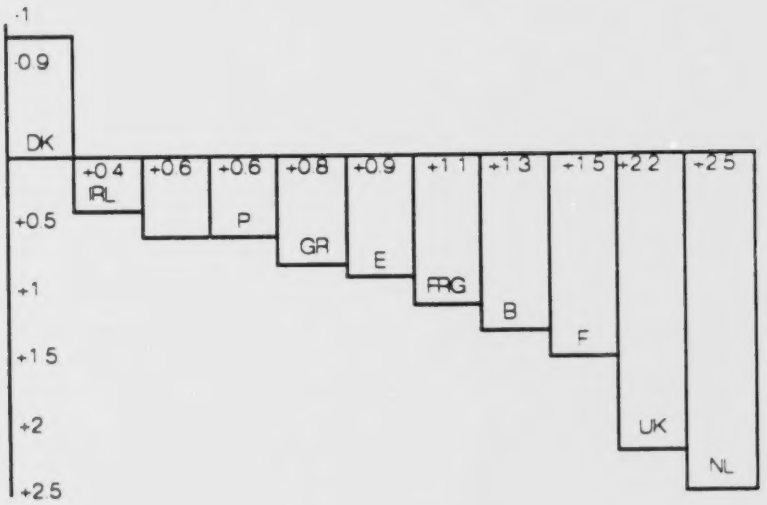
The values represent the gap between the highest and the lowest regional birth rate for nine Member States

Source: Eurostat Basic Statistics of the Community 27th edn. 1990, Tables 3.1-3.9 (amended)

Table 4: Range of intracountry regional variation in birth rates, 1987

Greece, mildly in Germany (both eastern and western), and most noticeably in Denmark. Together with a slight upswing in birth rates, this has been taken by some to indicate a return to traditional values and ways of life. This may be so, at least for some countries, but fiscal and social policy measures influence these trends too. In any event, trends in other parts of the Community suggest quite different trajectories of change, as, for example, in the case of France. The 1980s have witnessed a sharp shift away from marriage and towards cohabitation in France. Table 2 (on p. 26) shows that France now has the lowest marriage rate in the Community, but, as in Denmark, a high percentage of young people living as a couple. The majority, however (14% vs. 5%), are cohabiting. This is a very recent change. We noted earlier that young French people's living arrangements have shifted towards living alone or cohabiting. The French birth rate is the second highest in the Community, which is partly related to the increased ethnic diversity of the population, but also reflects comparatively 'family-friendly' taxation and employment legislation. Marriage typically occurs neither particularly early nor late relative to other Community countries, and, on average, it continues to precede childbearing (cf. Table 5 overleaf), although by the mid-80s, almost 20% of births were to non-married women (Audirac, 1987). Space precludes a close and differentiated analysis of these trends, but even so, they do not plausibly support a return to traditional ways of life.

Regional differences show the importance of closer and culturally informed analysis of trends such as these. Birth rates and completed family size have fallen significantly across recent decades in all Community countries, particularly so in Portugal, The Netherlands, Spain and Italy; most recently and dramatically of all in Ireland (Employment in Europe, 1990, p.89). At the close of the 1980s, the EUR12 average birth rate is 11.8 per thousand population. The range, however, extends from 16.6 in Ireland to 9.8 in Italy (cf. Table 2 above, p. 26). At the same time, there are wide regional variations in birth rates within Member States, as shown in Table 4 (p.28). Regional variations are narrow in Denmark, Belgium, the FRG and Great Britain (excluding Northern Ireland in this case, which has a much higher birth rate than the rest of the UK). Regional variations are rather wider in The Netherlands, France, Portugal and Spain; they are widest of all in Italy. Such variations exert significant effects upon familial and educational socialising contexts. Families of different sizes vary in the number and ordinal positioning of siblings, their conjugal division of labour, their material circumstances, and their patterns of everyday family life. Young people's identities and orientations are bound to differ accordingly, although we know little about how. Such differences equally have implications for dependency ratios, labour market opportunity structures, and e/migration patterns. All of these issues are particularly relevant for young people's situations and the scope they have for formulating and realising their hopes and plans.



The values represent the gap between average age at first marriage for females and average age at first childbirth.

Incomplete data for Luxembourg

Source: Eurostat Demographic Statistics 1990 Tables F-5 and E-3 (amended)

Table 5: Gap between marriage and childbirth: averages, by Member State, females, 1987

Finally, the combination of average ages at marriage and first childbirth for young women produces a compact four-fold centre-peripheries model of diversities. Table 5 (above, p. 30) shows the relationship between these two factors for eleven Member States. Firstly, *statistically speaking* (10), in Denmark - the affluent, Scandinavian periphery - women bear their first child at 26 years of age, almost a year before they marry. Secondly, in northwestern Europe, women marry at 24 or 25. In the centrally located countries of France, Belgium and the FRG, women have their first child at least a year later. In the maritime countries, as represented by the UK and The Netherlands, they wait well over two years before they start a family. Thirdly, on the western and southern less affluent peripheries, women tend to marry earlier (between the ages of 23 and 25) but have a child within the following year. This is the case in Greece, Portugal, Spain, and southern Italy; Irish women marry latest in this group, but children then arrive quickest.

These groupings, interestingly enough, run in broad parallel with a range of other social demographic data. This suggests that the Community can be usefully divided into 'macroregions' with broadly distinctive cultural and economic contexts, and with characteristic social and policy patterns. Nevertheless, such groupings are based on statistical artefacts, not lived realities. It would be quite inappropriate to conclude from the above, for example, that a European-wide perspective on youth policy need not include the needs of young parents. Neither should we suppose that the majority of young women in Denmark start out adult life as single mothers. The patterns of young people's lives are much more complex than this. The simple truth is that we have very little systematic knowledge about how these patterns 'hang together' in practice.

1.3.3 Young people in the labour market

Entry into the labour market is also a process, which for some young people begins well before they officially become economically active. Most young people are *gradually absorbed* into the labour market in one way or another, whether through choice or necessity, formally or informally. There are differing modes of absorption, however, some of which are characteristic for particular regions and local economies. In Mediterranean tourist areas, young people are early drawn into unskilled service jobs (waiters, hotel work, street peddling, etc.), whether as part of a family enterprise or through casual work - frequently enough on the grey economy. For young Europeans in general, family and friends are the most significant means of finding employment, although in the northern countries, contacting employers directly is an equally important source of jobs. In southern Europe, family and friends are overwhelmingly important; in Greece, this is the only relevant route (69% found their current job this way, as reported in Young Europeans 1990, p.146). Further, youth employment in tourist areas raises important issues in considering the acquisition of cosmopolitan language and social skills. It was pointed out to us by a youth researcher from Corfu that tourist areas act as a 'cultural crossroads' for young people in these respects. What is certainly the case is that young people who begin working life in this informal way experience a very different process of socialisation into employment and occupational roles than do those taken into formal apprenticeships in the former GDR or job training schemes in The Netherlands' Randstadt. This applies just as much to young people growing up on the family farm in rural south-west England (cf. Wallace et al., 1991) as to those living in Mediterranean tourist areas.

Part-time and informal/illegal employment of children beginning in very early adolescence is by no means a new phenomenon. Neither is it restricted to less developed or rural economies. Inner London schoolchildren aged 12-14 in the mid-1980s commonly worked in what were locally termed 'little jobs' after school and at weekends. From the age of 15 - at which employment becomes legal - almost all those from manual backgrounds had a part-time job, or were urgently looking for one. Local 'corner shops', family-run take-away food bars and market stalls are the main sources of such employment. As the pupils get older, intermittent absences from school in order to earn money are not as unusual as we might like to think (Chisholm, 1990a). The problem of high school drop out rates before the formal end of compulsory schooling was specifically mentioned to us both in Portugal and in Greece. Push and pull factors are intertwined here, i.e., disaffection with schooling intersects with the desire or need to earn one's own money, or perhaps with the labour demands of a family business. At the other end of the spectrum, students in post-compulsory and higher education increasingly fund themselves wholly or partly through their own earnings, even though they are registered on full-time courses (see section

1.3.1). There is little doubt that businesses all over Europe, including large employers, would find it difficult to manage without such a large reservoir of casual and seasonal labour. Part-time and temporary employment has become increasingly common in the past decade. Not only adult women, but also young people are disproportionately likely to have such contracts, particularly in some Member States. In The Netherlands and in Denmark, two-fifths of young women and a quarter of young men are employed part-time (against a EUR12 average of 18% and 9% respectively; Employment in Europe 1989, pp.74-5).

In essence, young people are especially vulnerable to *precarious* forms of employment, which are generally becoming more widespread (once more). More flexible contracts, conditions and job content can be a positive development for some groups, in particular, the well qualified and well established. Young people are not in this position, and most benefit from a secure working environment whilst they are gaining skills and experience. Temporary, casual and flexible contracts are less likely to provide such an environment. Young Portuguese, for example, are the least likely among young Europeans to receive a standard wage for the work they do (only 49%; EUR12: 69%) and only one-fifth (half the European average) receive training as part of their job (Young Europeans 1990, p.158).

Entry into the labour market has been the main focus of youth policy and research attention in the last decade. There is a wealth of information at national level in the majority of Member States on this topic, which cannot be included here. In fact, youth researchers in all countries stressed that this issue must now cease to dominate our perspectives on youth transitions. As for all other aspects of transitions, entry into the labour market should be integrated into a more holistic approach in the 1990s. This report confines itself to demonstrating the diversity of young Europeans' circumstances with two basic indicators - economic activity and unemployment rates, broken down by sex, country and region.

In general and in the longer term, economic activity rates for young people have been declining as educational participation rates have risen. This trend has intensified across the Community during the past decade as a direct and indirect consequence of high youth unemployment rates. However, levels of economic activity require careful and specific interpretation, since they are influenced by several underlying and interrelating factors that take different forms in each Member State. For example, the higher the proportion of young people who continue their education beyond the minimum age, the lower economic activity rates will be. The earlier the age at which compulsory education and training ends, the higher economic activity rates will be. The ages at which young people typically marry and at which young women bear their first child similarly affect economic activity rates (especially male rates). (11) In other words, such data require contextualisation within established national 'transition

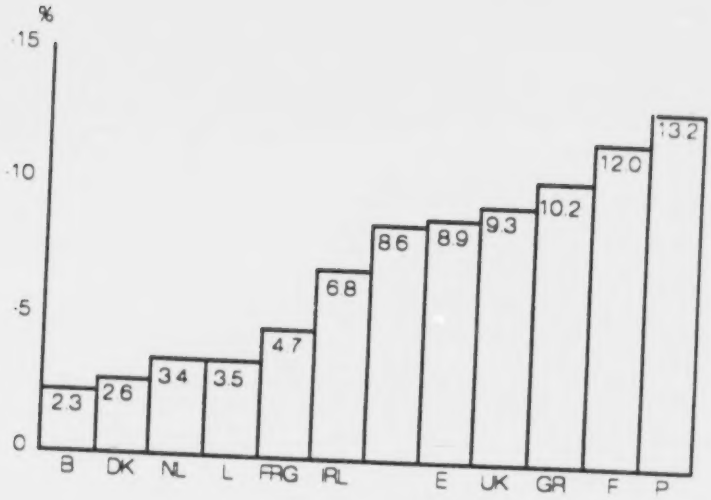
systems' and regional cultural traditions. The spread of economic activity rates across the Community is, therefore, unsurprising. Table 6 (overleaf) shows a range of between approximately 39% (Belgium) and 72% (Denmark) for young men; 30% (Greece) and 69% (Denmark) for young women. We can then immediately point out that in Belgium, compulsory education/training continues to the age of 18+; that post-compulsory educational participation rates are high; and that youth unemployment rates are also relatively high, which encourages still higher educational participation rates. In Denmark, on the other hand, part-time employment rates amongst young people, many of whom will be studying at the same time, are high; there is very little difference between the rates and continuity of women's and men's employment in youth or adult life; and ages at marriage and first childbirth are the highest in the Community. In Greece, young people stay in the educational system as long as they can if they have the opportunity to do so. This is the route to highly desirable, secure public sector jobs in a struggling, low employment economy. Rates of youth unemployment are also high - very high indeed for young women, who also marry relatively young in a culture where traditional norms and values about gender roles remain strong. These factors depress young people's economic activity rates. Many young Greek women, too, live in isolated rural areas. They are less likely ever to become officially economically active, and are more likely to be absorbed into a kinship based local work system, as in the case of France's 'aides familiales.'

The figures in Table 6 could be discussed individually for each Member State in these kinds of ways. Alternatively, it is possible to group countries on the basis of the *difference between* male and female economic activity rates, as shown in Table 7 (below, p. 36). In all countries, young men's activity rates are higher than young women's, but the degree to which they differ varies considerably. In some Member States, activity rates by sex differ by less than 5%: in Belgium, Denmark, The Netherlands, Luxembourg and in the ex-FRG. In all these countries, educational participation rates are high for both sexes; education and training increasingly extends well into the twenties; and young women's labour force participation rates have also risen in recent decades. This produces a certain convergence in gendered patterns of education-employment transitions (although this does not mean that employment opportunities and occupational distribution by sex have also converged). In Ireland, Italy, Spain and the UK the differences are rather more marked. The reasons are diverse; but we might point to varying mixtures of tradition and modernity in relation to gender roles combined with relatively less affluent economies. In Greece, France and Portugal there is at least a 10% gap between young men's and young women's activity rates. Greece and Portugal might be seen as much more accentuated examples of traditionalism and less developed economies. In the case of France, not only are unemployment rates among young women markedly higher than those for young men, but girls and young women perform significantly better at all levels of the educational system. They are especially well-represented in

	Males	Rank	Rank	Females
DK	71.7	1	1	69.1
UK	69.6	2	2	60.3
P	63.8	3	5=	50.6
FRG	58.0	4	4	53.3
NL	57.4	5	3	55.0
L	54.1	6	5=	50.6
IRL	52.3	7	7	45.5
E	48.9	8	8	40.0
I	48.2	9	9	39.6
F	47.7	10	11	35.7
GR	40.2	11	12	30.0
B	39.2	12	10	36.9

Source: Eurostat (1990) Regions: Statistical Yearbook 1989. Table II-3 (amended)

Table 6: Economic activity rates, 14-24 year olds, by sex and Member State, 1987, %



The values represent the gap between male and female 14-24 year old economic activity rates (as shown in Table 6, p.35). In all Member States, male activity rates are higher than female rates.

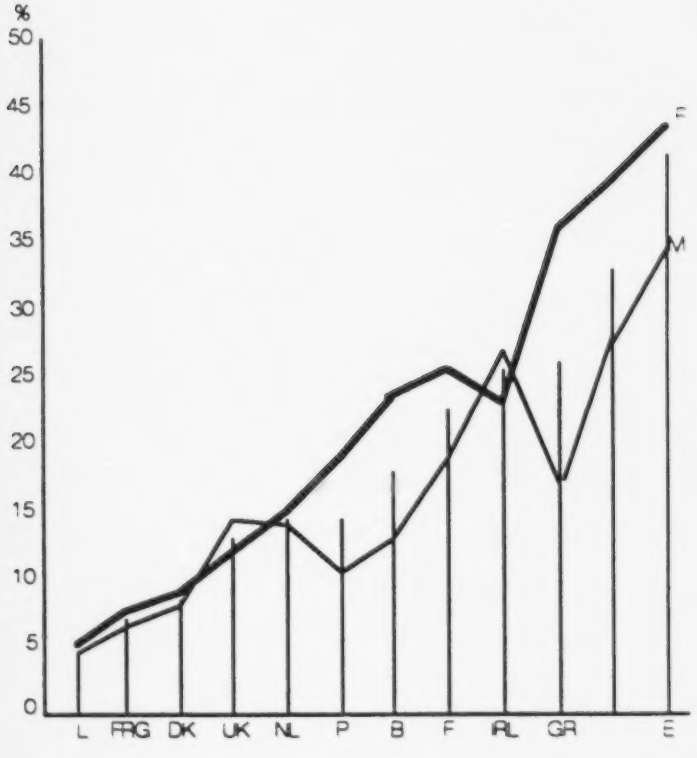
Source: Eurostat (1990) Regions: Statistical Yearbook 1989, Table II-3 (amended)

Table 7: Difference between male and female economic activity rates, 14-24 year olds, %, 1987

academic tracks and courses, whereas their uptake of vocational specialisms, which characteristically lead to earlier labour market entry, is particularly low (cf. Boyer and Establet, 1990; Charles,1991). We can see from this aspect of young Europeans' situations that a simple centre-periphery map of the Community is not necessarily the most fruitful way to appreciate diversities of circumstance and opportunity. Regional analyses of economic activity rates offer more potential, and we return to this point below.

Youth unemployment rates have begun to fall significantly in many, *but by no means in all*, Community countries. Unemployment amongst the under 25s increased sharply across the whole of western Europe after 1973. By 1982, some of the figures were quite dramatic: in France, for example, almost 65% of those unemployed for at least six months were aged under 25. Many governments had begun to introduce job creation and vocational training schemes to reduce youth unemployment by this time, although in the mid 1980s rates remained distressingly high in some countries - for example, in Spain (45%) and in Italy (34%), whereas in the ex-FRG youth unemployment was still 'only' about 10% (OECD, 1986b, p.115).

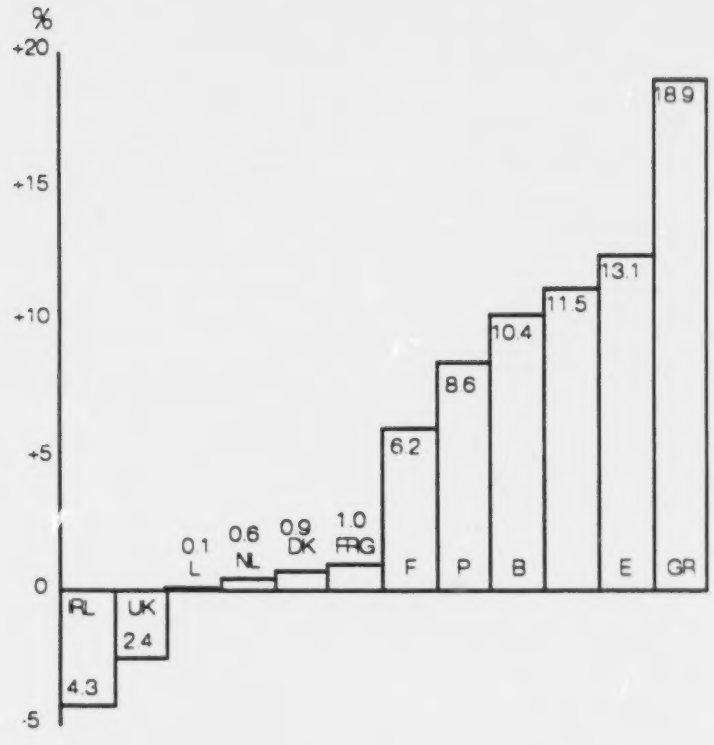
The Young Europeans 1990 survey response suggests a certain general improvement in the youth labour market. Compared with the 1987 findings, fewer young people are holding temporary work contracts, fewer have experienced extended periods of unemployment, and more have been in their present job for longer (ibid., p.148). Nevertheless, in Greece, Spain and Italy, between a fifth and a quarter of the Young Europeans respondents had been unemployed at least twice since completing their education (EUR12: 16%). In Luxembourg, where youth unemployment is very low, only 1% of respondents were in the same position (ibid., p.150). Table 8 (overleaf) shows youth unemployment rates in 1988 (the most recent Eurostat figures available). They range from a low of 4.6% for young male Luxembourgers to a high of 48.3% for young Spanish women. Female youth unemployment rates are higher than those for young men, except in Ireland and the UK, where young women are slightly less likely to be unemployed. (12) Again, as shown in Table 9 (below, p. 39), the degree of *difference between* unemployment rates for young men and young women varies widely. As in the case of economic activity rates (see Table 7, p. 36), there is very little difference at all for Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Denmark and the ex-FRG. In these countries, youth unemployment rates are also amongst the lowest in the Community. In France, Portugal and Belgium, overall unemployment rates are higher and the gaps between the sex specific rates are wider. In Italy, Spain and Greece, youth unemployment remains high, and the gender differences are most marked of all. In Greece, young women are *twice as likely* to be unemployed as young men. Many contributing factors lie behind these patterns. It is highly probable that the young women and young men at most risk of experiencing unemployment are not



Vertical lines show the overall unemployment rate for 14-24 year olds, plain graph line those for young men; bold graph line those for young women

Source: Eurostat (1990) 1988 Labour Force Survey, Table O·2 (amended)

Table 8: Youth unemployment rates by sex and Member State, %, 1988



The values represent the gap between male and female 14-24 year old unemployment rates (as shown in Table 8, p. 38). Male rates are higher than female rates in all Member States except in IRL and UK.

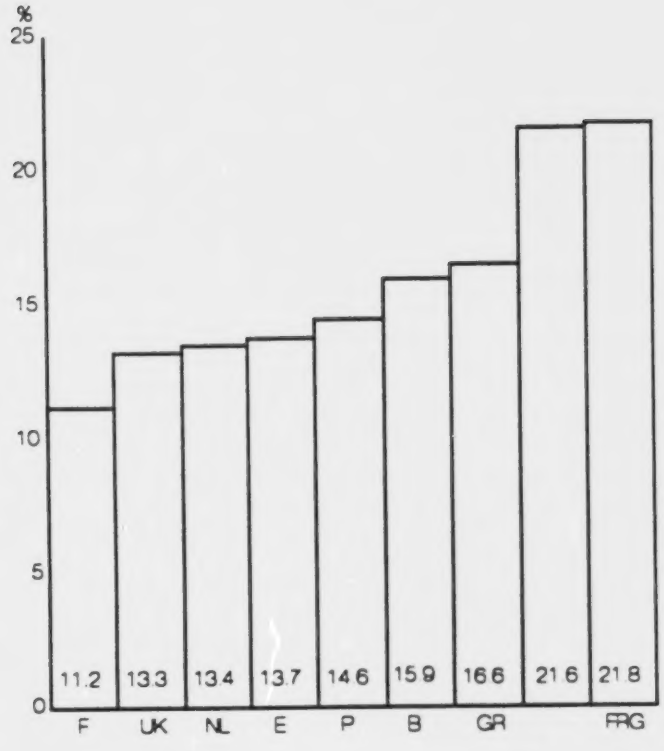
Source: Eurostat (1990) 1988 Labour Force Survey, Table O-2 (amended)

Table 9: Difference between male and female youth unemployment rates in Member States, %, 1988

socially similar in the first place. In other words, they may have different levels and kinds of educational qualifications, different opportunities for geographical mobility, and different degrees of access to labour market and occupational sectors. The fact of sharply differing life circumstances remains. On the whole, a centre-periphery model grounded in economic development and affluence fits rather better here, whereby Belgium, Ireland and the UK may well be key cases for analysis. Rates of economic activity, youth unemployment, and sex differentials in relation to both, are quite disparately patterned in comparison with the other nine Member States.

It is the composition of the young unemployed that causes most concern. Here, polarisation and marginalisation processes are at their clearest. Unemployment rates vary not only within Member States and across Community macroregions, but unemployment is also concentrated amongst those from disadvantaged backgrounds and from ethnic minority groups. (13) The Young Europeans 1990 findings suggest, for example, that the improvement on the youth labour market has disproportionately benefited groups who are better placed to begin with. Unemployment is commonest amongst the least educated, wherever they may grow up; and long term youth unemployment has declined more markedly for young men than for young women (ibid., pp.160,166). At the same time, these trends must be viewed in cultural context: unemployment has different implications in Rochdale (northern England) and in Calabria (southern Italy; cf. Leccardi,1990; Cavalli, 1990). Argimon Maza (1990) reports, for example, that many young Spaniards have developed a consciously transitory orientation to paid work, given the scarcity of employment itself and also of jobs they would *like* to do. They have become 'modern nomads', switching competently between different lifestyles, jobs and periods of unemployment.

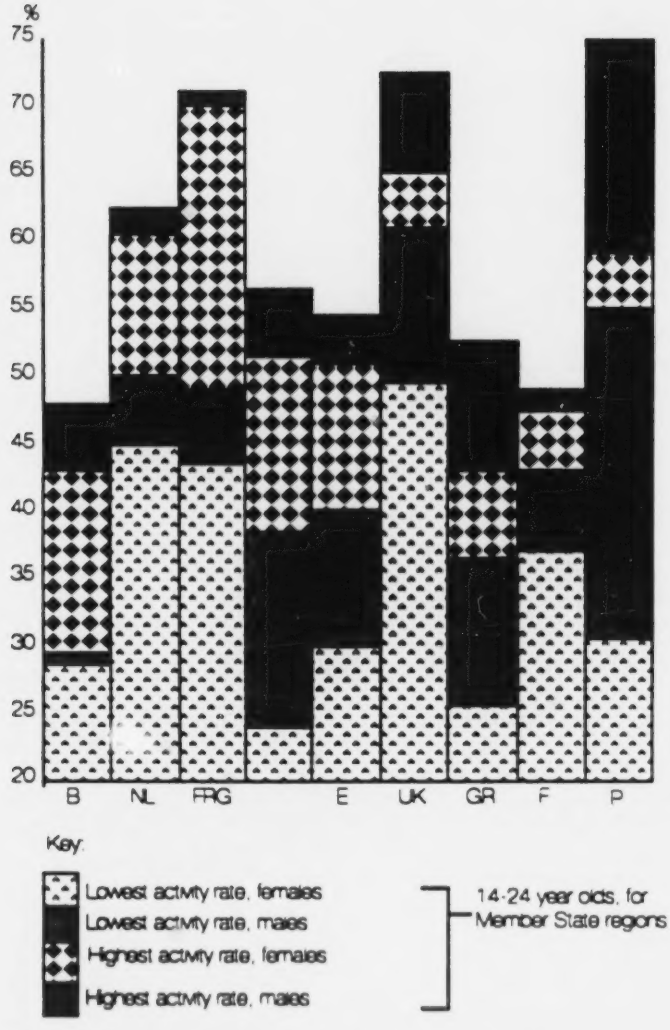
In this context, young people's economic activity rates can be taken as crude, yet practicable indicators of highly specific and widely varying circumstances of life within the Community. The regional differences thrown up by the statistical series are, quite plainly, astonishing. Tables 10 and 11 (pp. 41 and 42) summarise these patterns for nine Member States. (There are no Eurostat regional breakdowns for Denmark, Ireland and Luxembourg.) For example, almost 38% of young people in Madrid and Asturias are economically active. This is the lowest regional rate in Spain. Catalonia has the highest activity rate - almost 52%. As shown in Table 10, this produces a range of 14% between the lowest and the highest Spanish rates. The range of intracountry regional differences in young people's activity rates is nowhere narrower than 11 percentage points (in France). As we might have expected, regional differences in Italy are very wide (between 32% in Calabria and 54% in Trentino). Yet in the pre-unification FRG, one of the most affluent Member States, regional differences are as marked as they are in Italy, ranging from 49% in West Berlin and Bremen to 71% in Oberfranken (in Bavaria; see Bertram



The values represent the range of intracountry difference between the lowest and the highest regional economic activity rates for 14-24 year olds. Regional breakdowns for DK, IRL and L are not available.

Source: Eurostat (1990) Regions: Statistical Yearbook 1989, Table II-3 (amended)

Table 10: Range of regional economic activity rates for nine Member States, 14-24 year olds, 1987



Member States are ordered from left to right as in Table 7 (p.36), according to the overall degree of difference between 14-24 year olds economic activity rates by sex. In B rates are most similar, in P most dissimilar. Regional breakdowns for DK, IRL and L are not available.

The table is not a cumulative bar chart. The top line of each box represents lowest and highest activity rates for females and males in the order shown in the key immediately above. In each Member State, the lowest rates are always female and the highest rates always male, but the absolute rates for both sexes differ widely between Member States.

Source: Eurostat (1990) Regions: Statistical Yearbook 1989, Table I-3 (amended)

Table 11: Lowest and highest regional economic activity rates for nine Member States, 14-24 year olds, by sex, 1987

and Dannenbeck, 1991). Brussels youth is the least likely in the whole Community to be economically active, young people in Oberfranken the most likely to be so.

Table 11 (above, p.42) moves one step further to show variations in activity rates by region and sex at the same time. The differences that emerge are great enough to 'overturn the expected' as far as gender relations are concerned. In its most extreme form, 24% of young Calabrian women and 30% of young men in Brussels, but 70% of young women in Oberfranken and 75% of young men in the Azores are economically active. Of course, we are not comparing like with like - but this is the essential point. As a metaphor for a holistic complex of social, economic and cultural context, the region in which young people grow up and embark upon youth transitions exerts a highly significant range of effects upon structures of opportunity and options. But, to echo the point made earlier in relation to young people's family lives, we know very little about how these patterns 'hang together', still less about how they influence young people's orientations and values. It is not only that 'the do-able' is socially and economically *circum*scribed, but also that the thinkable becomes culturally *in*scribed. A new Europe has not only to address the question of facilitating equal opportunities for labour market mobility and interchange. It has equally to consider how young people from widely differing backgrounds can meet, live and work with each other positively. This is not only a question of language, but of cultural competence.

1.3.4 Education and training

Increasingly precarious and risk-laden transitions to working life have particularly contributed to the *fragmentation* of young people's routes to adulthood. The extension of education and training, on the other hand, is especially significant in *delaying* the transition to adult life, both in terms of economic independence and in terms of family-building and styles of life. Those who do *not* continue with some form of education and training are more likely to complete the 'transition milestones' sequence earlier, even if they do so in a fragmented manner. For example, such young people may marry before finding secure employment, or they may have children before having suitable independent housing, etc. This is by no means new (as discussed in section 1.3.1). But until recently, the majority of young Europeans did not pursue extended post compulsory education and training. A relatively brief youth phase was the *typical* experience; those who enjoyed a longer moratorium were very much in the minority.

The spread of extended education and training began earlier in some countries (for example, in the ex-FRG) than in others (for example, in the UK); in some Member States this process has only just begun (for example, in Portugal, cf. Tavares Emídio, 1988). But by 1990, two-fifths of 15-24 year olds in the Community were still at school. Forty-two per cent of those who had left school had continued with some form of vocational training or further/higher education. The pace of change is currently rapid: in 1987, 35% had pursued post compulsory education and training (Young Europeans 1990, p.117). Young Europeans everywhere overwhelmingly continue with their studies because they think it will be to their labour market and career advantage to do so. (14) The belief that further study will bring advantages is strongest in Italy, Luxembourg, Denmark and Greece; it is weakest in the UK and in Belgium. On the whole, young people follow courses of study that they judge will lead to the kind of job they would like to have, but also that which interests them. The focus on job-related studies is strongest of all in Portugal and the UK (ibid., p.128).

However, young women are particularly inclined to say that that they have continued their studies not only because they think it will improve their job prospects but also because they simply enjoy studying (ibid.). In other words, young women are less narrowly instrumental in their approach to education and training than young men are, which corresponds to the greater importance they attach to intrinsic features of their jobs. Young women are generally also at least as educationally successful as young men are, though they are still more likely to pursue short-cycle further and higher education. In sum: „... where access to upper secondary education is on a selective basis, girls equal or outnumber boys. It is also more common for boys to leave school without any qualifications than for girls to do so. In many countries girls now outnumber boys in the upper levels of academic secondary education which

lead to entrance to higher education. Here young women have made substantial inroads ... and in some countries are now present in equal numbers. ... Marked disparities remain in enrolment in vocational education and training and in patterns of subject choice in upper secondary and higher education. ... Within higher education, male postgraduate students still greatly outnumber female postgraduates..." (Wilson, 1991, pp.4-5). It is widely argued, with justification, that the expansion of educational access from the 1960s has proved of most benefit to (indigenous and socially more privileged) girls. Whether this will be the case for the reforms in education and vocational training that have taken place across Europe in the 1980s remains to be seen.

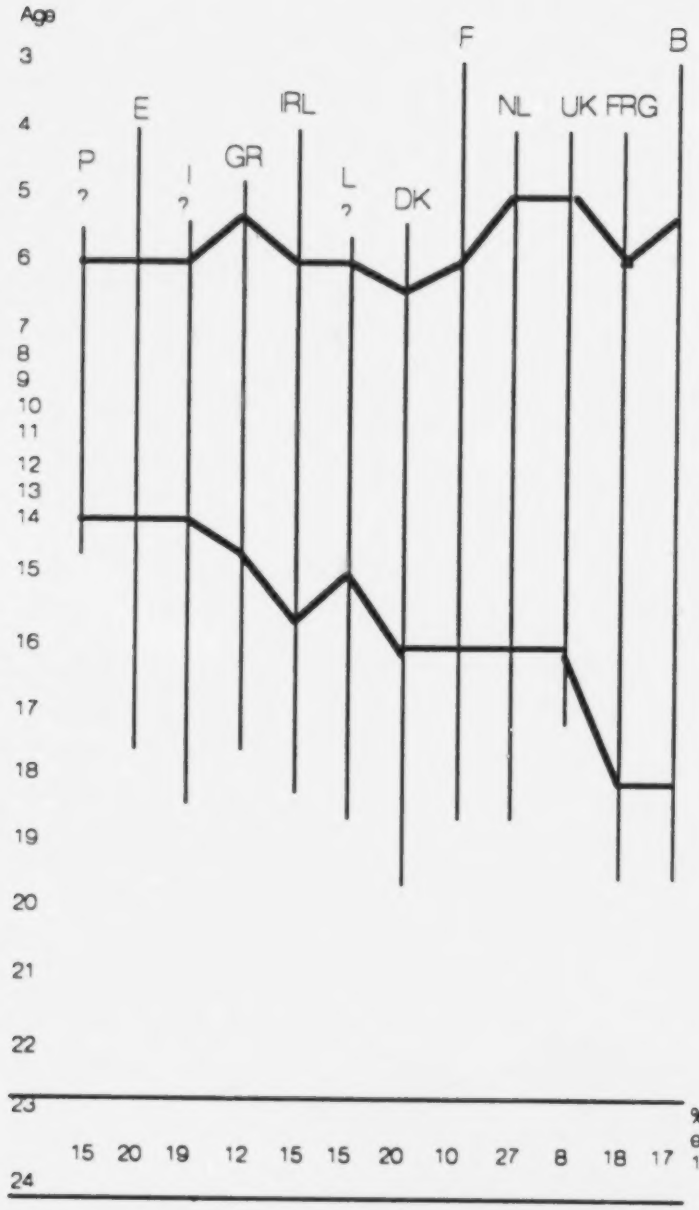
The reason why young women still tend to curtail their education and training at the upper end is quite clear. In planning their futures, they take more account of family-building than young men do. Although average ages at marriage and first childbirth have risen, the process of family-building still begins earlier for young women than it does for young men (see section 1.3.2), which collides with extended educational participation. This process includes establishing the material basis for having children, i.e. securing suitable accommodation, furnishing a home, and, where possible, accumulating some resources to ease the financially difficult early years of the family life-cycle. Most couples will share this 'nest-building' task, but it means that young women must begin earning at an earlier age than their partners. These kinds of intersections between family formation and educational participation illustrate, once more, the importance of a holistic approach to appreciating young people's situations. *'Mixing up'* the normative transitions sequence remains, in practice, difficult, because social policy and institutional arrangements still presuppose traditional patterns. For example, organising and financing family-building whilst both partners are still in education and training is very problematic. This helps to account for why more young women break off their higher education studies than young men. *Delaying* full transition to adulthood is more practicable, which helps to account for why many young women postpone childbearing for longer.

Returning to the general picture, describing and comparing education and training participation rates across the Community might appear to be a simple task. Data sources abound, and the study of comparative education is a long established specialist field. In fact, it is extraordinarily difficult to make accurate comparisons and to gain a real understanding of educational provision and process in countries other than one's own. This is because education and training systems and practices are deeply embedded in the historical and cultural traditions of nation states. Major differences in institutional structures, curricula and qualifications already exist at the lower secondary level (for illustrations, see OECD, 1989a; Gordon, 1990). The sector most directly relevant for the majority of the 15-24 age group is post compulsory further and higher education at below university degree level. Of

all sectors, this one is the most complex in all countries. It includes, for example, part and full time studies, academic and vocational elements, school/college and employer based courses, public and private providers, diverse certification bodies, continuous assessment and final examinations, short-cycle cul-de-sacs and modular progression/transfer routes, [...]. In the words of a recent report, „post compulsory education ... remains a complex, confusing and poorly conceptualised sector. ... [Matters are] complicated by the fact that the age range of compulsory schooling varies from country to country [and] complexity is compounded once one begins to compare ... Comparative studies of this particular stage are thus perhaps uniquely difficult to make" (OECD, 1989b, pp.7, 19, 38). (15)

Table 12 (overleaf; background figures in Table 12a, p. 48) summarises a range of information about the educational systems of the Member States and their participation rates. It covers the age range 3 to 24, which places the educational situations of young Europeans into a fully continuous context. The shaded area indicates the period of compulsory schooling. At the upper end of this period, schooling may be part-time and may comprise employer-based vocational education and training (as in Germany). Where compulsory schooling begins earlier (as in The Netherlands and the UK), the first year's curriculum may be very similar to the activities pursued in pre-school kindergarten in those countries where schooling begins later (as in Ireland). In some Member States, enrolment in pre-schooling is high from an early age (as in France's *écoles maternelles*), but this does not mean that three year olds typically spend all day every day at nursery school. The important point is that children from different countries typically begin regular experience of a socialising and learning environment outside the family at different ages. These ages do not necessarily correspond to the formal start of compulsory schooling. Similarly, periods of compulsory schooling vary between eight and twelve years across the Community, but in most Member States, it is now usual for young people to remain in the post-compulsory education and training system for differing lengths of time. The vertical lines in Table 12 therefore show the whole period of time for which at least 50% of each age group are involved in some form of education. (16)

As far as compulsory education is concerned, Member States split into three groups: a minimum of eight years in Portugal, Spain and Italy; a minimum of nine years in Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and Denmark; and a third group with the lengthiest compulsory systems, comprising France (ten years), The Netherlands, the UK and the ex-FRG (all eleven years) and Belgium (twelve years). With the exception of the UK, all countries in this last group include, in principle, a period of mandatory upper secondary level vocational education and training for those who do not pursue academic tracks oriented towards higher education entry. In Table 12, the twelve Member States are arranged according to the length of compulsory schooling, but as their corresponding vertical lines show, a



The vertical lines show the ages for which at least 50% of the relevant age group are in some form of full or part time education and training, from pre-school through to postgraduate studies, in each Member State.

Key:

	Compulsory education and training; the bold lines show the beginning and the end of compulsory schooling
?	No information on pre-schooling in sources used

Sources: OECD 1986, Education in OECD Countries 1984-5, Tables 4.2,4.3. OECD 1989, Education in OECD Countries 1986-7, Tables 4.1,4.2,4.3, Employment in Europe 1990, Graphs 96,97, Cavalli, 1988, Table I-3. (Amended; see Table 12a (next page) and fn 15)

Table 12: Participation in education and training: graphic comparison between Member States

Age	P		E		I		GR		IRL	
	OECD	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE	Giov. 80	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE
15	45	•	79	•	69	•	86	•	91	•
16	35	47	62	60	60	81	75	75	82	91
17	41	39	53	55		75	59	58	65	71
18	36	28	29	44	52	70	43	44	41	58
19	29		15		36		29		24	
20	24	28		38	25		29	38	18	29
21			•		21	31	16		11	
22	13				18		12		7	
23		15		20	15	19	10	12	4	15
24					14		9		2	

	L		DK		F		NL		UK	
	OECD	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE
15		•	97	•	95	•	99	•	99	•
16		70	90	82	88	95	93	98	69	77
17		63	75	75	80	88	78	88	49	60
18		50	68	68	60	62	60	71	33	34
19			52		43		43		29	
20	•	30	36	25	28	35	32	50	24	17
21			28		19		23		•	
22			24		14		18			
23		15	22	20	10	10	14	27	•	8
24			20		7		11			

	FRG		B	
	OECD	LFS/ EE	OECD	LFS/ EE
15	100	•	95	•
16	100	99	93	92
17	100	97	86	82
18	84	81	68	59
19	57		53	
20	37	23	46	49
21	26		28	
22	28		23	
23	17	18	17	17
24	15		12	

Key: • Figure not available

OECD : OECD Education Statistics 1986/7 except: P:1983/4; GR,IRL, and UK (19yrs only) 1985/6; E,GR,IRL: FT only.

LFS/EE : Employment in Europe (1990): 16-18yrs: 1985/6 except: UK: 1986/7, I,P: 1987/8. 19-24yrs: 1988 data from Community Labour Force Survey.

Giov 80 : Giovanni Anni 80 Cavalli & de Lillo (1988). 1987 figures. (No OECD figures for I.)

These sources were used to draw Table 12 (preceding page). For some Member States, figures from different sources diverge, in others hardly at all (see fn. 15).

Table 12a: Participation in education and training: Member States comparisons,%, 1980s

shorter compulsory system does not necessarily imply lower post compulsory participation rates. Italy, Luxembourg and Denmark have high retention rates, for example. In Denmark, participation does not drop below 50% until between the ages of 19 and 20, and it remains amongst the highest in the Community for 24 year olds, too. On the other hand, the longer the period of compulsory schooling, the longer participation tends to remain buoyant afterwards. Belgium is the clearest example, where the 1988 Community Labour Force Survey found 49% of 19 to 22 year olds in education. This helps to explain, of course, the very low economic activity rates for young people in Belgium (see section 1.3.3). (17)

The same survey finds four-fifths of West Germans, but only three-tenths of Britons and Portuguese in education and training at the age of 18. The UK and Portugal are the two Member States with the lowest post compulsory participation rates; in the UK, this continues right through to the age of 24, when only 8% of young people are still being educated. The low post compulsory participation rates in the UK have attracted considerable attention in recent years, since this is exceptional amongst the more developed Community economies. Explanations of this long established pattern point to the early and high selectivity of the schooling system, the underdevelopment of a systematic system of vocational education, and an over reliance by employers on a cheap, low skill labour force (most recently: Finegold et al.,1990). The introduction of the Youth Training scheme across the 1980s has, in effect, pushed up overall retention rates substantially. (18)

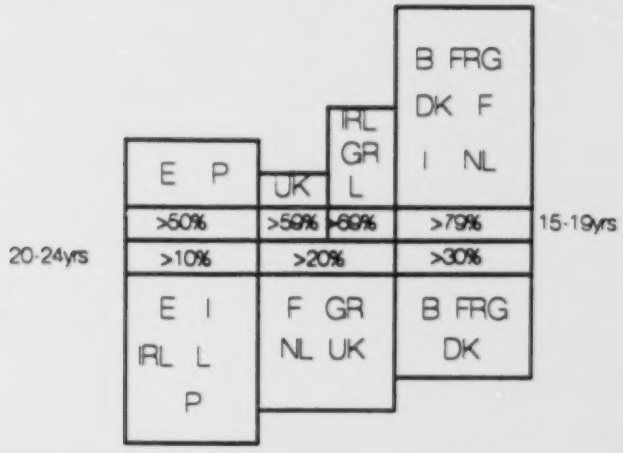
The relatively low levels of post compulsory education/training participation and a three or four year maximum to higher education study for almost all students help to explain why the youth phase in the UK remains shorter than in comparable Community countries. Cultural traditions play a role too. Anglo-Saxon culture is highly pragmatic in character, and this is reflected in a preference for practice based, experiential and participative teaching and learning at all levels. Learning on and through the job is not to be equated with the 'sitting next to Nellie' model of vocational training, and competence is not necessarily a function of paper qualifications or formal position. The majority of young Britons - and perhaps young Europeans generally - much prefer further education and training programmes that are practice based, but an élitist, 'gentlemanly' educational philosophy transferred from the public schools into mass schooling has retained dominance through to the present day.

In contrast, young Portuguese are today growing up during a period of intense economic and social modernisation; it takes time - and resources - for the education and training system to catch up and keep pace. This nevertheless places most young people in Portugal at a marked competitive disadvantage to share in the opportunities presented by post-1992 Europe, especially if we consider the importance

of access to *learning about* Europe. In countries such as Portugal, the role of non-formal education as a channel of learning and experience for young people will be of considerable strategic importance. Nevertheless, school and college based curriculum and exchange programmes are bound to be at the core of the task of educating and training for a future Europe. In Portugal, whilst higher education retention rates are not particularly low, in 1988 only 47% of 16 year olds were still being educated. Of the Portuguese respondents to the Young Europeans 1990 survey who were employed, only 20% said that they received training as part of their job (EUR12:41%; p.158). Similarly, four-fifths of those young Portuguese who had completed their schooling at the time of the survey had not ever embarked on any form of vocational training afterwards. These data all point to the fact that currently, a clear majority of young people in Portugal are not in a position to take advantage of exchange and mobility opportunities, since they are neither in education nor in vocational training.

At the other end of the continuum, at least half of young Danes, West Germans and Belgians are still in some form of education and training at the age of 19. By this time, however, it becomes increasingly difficult to secure extensive and comparable data on young people's access to and use of post compulsory education and training, as the 1990 edition of Employment in Europe itself concludes (p.115). Table 13 (overleaf) compresses this very disparate information into a simple three way classification of Member States according to the proportion of 15 to 19 year olds and 20 to 24 year olds who were in education/training in the latter half of the 1980s. Participation rates can be low (i.e. under 50% for the younger group, under 10% for the older group), medium (i.e. under 69% and 20% respectively), or high (i.e. under 79% and 30% respectively). Five combinations result. In Belgium, the ex-FRG and Denmark, 15-24 participation rates are high; in Spain and Portugal, they are low. Participation rates are high for 15 to 19 year olds in France, The Netherlands and Italy, but fall off rather for those aged 20 and above (especially in Italy). Greece and the UK show medium level participation rates for both age groups; in Ireland and Luxembourg, rates decline to a low level for the older age group.

There is always some delay in processing educational statistics, so that the most recent trends remain just on the horizon. Ireland, for example, has experienced quite significant social changes across the 1980s which have begun to affect the structure and sequencing of the youth phase in no small measure. A sharp decline in marriage and fertility rates together with rising age at marriage are one set of such changes (Kiely and Richardson, 1991). But our discussions with researchers in Dublin underlined the extent to which the young Irish have tried to counter a chronically depressed and over-supplied labour market by extending and raising their qualification levels over the past decade. The Irish government's policy is to encourage as many young people as possible to stay in education as long as possible, which has, in turn, resulted in large-scale expansion of the tertiary system, particularly in short-cycle non-



Member States are grouped according to the proportion of 15-19 year olds and 20-24 year olds who were enrolled in some form of FT or PT education and training at secondary and tertiary levels in the mid to late 1980s.

Sources: OECD 1989, Education in OECD Countries 1986/7, Charts V8, VC and Tables 4.2.4.3, Employment in Europe 1990, Graphs 96,97 (amended).

Table 13: Broad levels of enrolment in education and training for 15-24 year olds in the Member States, 1985-88

university higher education (cf. Clancy,1988). Ironically, the main effects of this strategy have been to produce credential inflation and increased internal differentiation within higher education, so that more educational investment brings no greater return for young people in the Irish labour market. The traditional and contemporary solution is to emigrate to work elsewhere, especially to the UK; and indeed, although the numbers of young Europeans who go abroad to work are few, it is the young Irish (together with the young Danes) who are most likely to have done so (Young Europeans 1990, p.69). From an Irish perspective, then, the question of comparability and mutual recognition of qualifications is a particularly salient one; agencies assisting young Irish emigrants to settle have built up a considerable fund of knowledge and experience about the difficulties encountered in this connection (cf. Murphy and Flynn, 1991).

A comparative view of the educational situations of young people must inevitably begin by looking at structural features and at participation rates. Despite their complexity, they are still the simplest starting point. Even here, interrelations between ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender and region of origin/residence are presently quite impossible to evaluate and summarise appropriately. This is a serious gap in our knowledge, especially in view of the central importance of the extension of education and training to the shaping of the youth phase. However, education is by no means merely

a formalised system for acquiring the knowledge and skills demanded by the society and economy in which young people grow up. That young people's circumstances and opportunities in this respect are quite differently structured across the Community is evident. But the process and experience of education as social learning, which contributes to the shaping of personal and national identities, orientations and values, is equally important for an understanding of young people's situations. This would imply looking much more closely at what young people are taught and learn, i.e. the *curriculum*, both official and hidden; and at how they are taught and learn, i.e. *pedagogy and interaction*. Such an undertaking lies far beyond the scope of this report, but it is one that is essential in building the foundations of a transnational, European approach to schooling.

There remains much to do. At the close of 1990, one-third of young Europeans have no desire to go abroad to work, over two-fifths do not want to study abroad, almost one-fifth still do not want to learn any foreign language at all, and no more than one-tenth of young Europeans in any one Member State are able to list correctly all the twelve Community countries (Young Europeans 1990, pp.69,94,100). We could, of course, turn the percentages around: two-thirds would consider working abroad, over half would like to study abroad, four-fifths want to learn foreign languages (and many are increasingly critical of the quality of the teaching they now receive), and on average young Europeans can name at least eight of the twelve Member States correctly. But in practice, only 8% of young Europeans have actually worked abroad, almost all of them in the 20-24 age group. 66% have never visited another country through an exchange or group programme, of whatever kind (ibid., pp.66-9). And, furthermore, throughout the whole pattern of response, it is always the better educated who are most positive, confident, competent and experienced in matters European. Educationally, young people's situations require concentrated attention if the potential opportunities of a post-1992 Europe are to be realised in practice.

1.4 Towards transnational youth research

Perhaps the most important point to make is that, currently, it is possible to offer only a very partial, selective view of the situation of young people in the European Community. We have intentionally rejected a perspective predicated upon young people as a 'problem' or as 'having problems', although traditionally this has been a dominant policy concern and, hence, is well represented in national research literatures too. Community co-operation in both policy and research might start more profitably by considering youth as a social category *for itself*; and by constructing a valid, meaningful map of young Europeans' lives in the full complexity that this task entails. The material we have used here illustrates, very crudely, how young people's lives and prospects are (very differently) *shaped by* their circumstances. We can but infer how they *themselves shape* their identities and futures. Yet it is the relationships between these two elements that *together shape* the form and quality of young people's social situations. In the words of one of the many researchers we spoke with across the Community, we do not 'catch the heartbeat' of our young people.

In the present context, the only practicable way to begin has been to draw on cross-sectional aggregate statistical information, despite its inherent disadvantages for accessing complex social processes that vary widely by cultural context. But even in their own terms, such data are highly partial in their coverage. Whether national or cross-national in origin, these sources focus upon simple educational and labour force participation and distribution together with basic social demographic indicators. Additionally and inevitably, the process of simplification for broad comparability means that important specificities are lost from view. For example, for the purpose of statistical series, attachment to the labour market is almost always defined in terms of the participation of *individuals*. The concept of a *collective* labour market attachment is underexposed, and yet this form of participation is highly significant for young people in some Community countries and regions - for example, in Mediterranean tourist areas. In sum, whilst such data are indispensable to the task of building up a picture of young Europeans' lives, we cannot assume that they constitute a sufficient resource for doing so.

There is, of course, a sizeable youth research literature of a more qualitative or ethnographic nature, some of which explicitly sets out to create a processual, relational analysis of the kind we lack at European level. However, if we are concerned to build up a balanced, transnational approach to youth affairs, its use presents a number of problems. Firstly, for some Member States there are very few such studies, in others a considerable number. This in itself produces an imbalance of information and perspectives available for European wide comparisons. Secondly, such studies are generally directed towards addressing particular theoretical or practical problems within a nationally defined context.

Cross-national and cross-cultural comparisons therefore rarely have the potential to move beyond an additive model, in which information exchange ultimately plays the leading role (cf. du Bois-Reymond and Hübner-Funk, 1991). Here, learning about what happens elsewhere acts as an illuminating impetus towards a deeper understanding of young people's situations in one's own country and cultures, but does not further our knowledge at transnational level. As one researcher pointed out, the problem is one of finding an appropriate framework. The prospect of doing comparative work properly is a frightening challenge, since it is easy to do the kind of comparative work which neglects that which is crucially explanatory. The development of sophisticated cultural competence (including, of course, language proficiency) is essential in order to undertake the task well, yet very few researchers indeed are in a position to do so. These points have a wider relevance than simply for youth research, but if we consider that Europe's future lies importantly with its young people, then fostering the development of a transnational tradition in this field has some importance.

A productive European youth research tradition must place *interrelatedness and multidimensionality* at the core of the analysis of life circumstances and value orientiations. This is why, for example, it is important not to equate youth transitions with transitions to the labour market, however important this element may be for economic and social planning as well as for individual biography. Similarly, our understanding of young people's situations must encompass the wider, more fluid elements of social context, such as changing orientations towards family and private life, the spread of postmodern values, and the importance of lifestyle as cultural expression. The social worlds in which young people will grow up after the 'watershed' year of 1992 will not suddenly and dramatically change; young people's prospects and practices will not be transformed overnight. So, for example, we should not expect actual patterns of mobility/immobility rapidly to reflect the conceptual projections for the mid-term future extant in some documents. But we should begin from the assumption that Europe is entering a new era - politically, economically, socially and culturally - which will have consequences for future young Europeans' lives.

It is therefore appropriate to regard this threshold as an opportunity to rejuvenate and reorient youth research towards a transnational perspective and practice. Two further principles are essential to such an enterprise. Firstly, gaining meaningful insight into how young Europeans experience and evaluate their lives and prospects (which, in turn, lends access to the factors that influence their decisions and plans) demands that we take young people seriously. What can we learn from them, for example, about coming to terms with a world that is changing very rapidly at a number of levels? Secondly, fostering the renewal of socio-political participation called for in almost all quarters requires a positive commitment to the active integration of young people into all matters that concern their lives -

including Community research and action programmes. Member States themselves increasingly support such a perspective, and Commission policy documents underwrite this principle in relation to its PETRA and Youth for Europe initiatives.

The third section of this report proposes a number of technical, pedagogic and research projects which respond to the spirit of these comments. These draw on the needs we have identified in the process of attempting to depict the youth phase across the European Community. In the light of European harmonisation and integration processes, we require systematic and transnational analyses for

- the socio-political, socio-legal and socio-cultural *regulation of youth transitions* across the Community;
- the intersections between *life cycle and social policy* for young people in specific regional communities and cultures;
- the future basis of *social solidarity, conflict and cultural identity* amongst young Europeans, against the background of a potential 'reshuffling' of social and cultural groups due to shifting patterns of mobility/immobility and due to individualisation processes;
- adducing the intersecting *dynamics of social advantage and disadvantage* (ethnicity, community/region, disability, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation.....) in the context of changing structures of opportunity and risk;
- charting the direction and meaning of changes in young people's *values and orientations* towards their lives and futures.

2. Youth Policy and Youth Research Towards 2000. Dimensions and Possibilities in the Community

2.1 National policies and research from the 1970s to the 1990s

The development of associative life and of caritative, social and cultural voluntary organisations, combined with an intensification of hardship and poverty, have resulted in policy interventions intended to promote, assist, organise and co-ordinate specific action programmes or concerted action initiatives for the benefit of young people. Such interventions have been initiated at differing points in time and have taken diverse forms, but, in general, their appearance represents an acknowledgement of both the cultural and the economic reality of 'youth' as a social group.

'European youth', whose contemporary and prospective situations are the subject of this discussion, reports itself, incidentally, as on the whole satisfied with life (Young Europeans 1987,1990). Today's youth is presented with a gamut of public and voluntary services, all concerned to guide and assist the transition to adult life. On the one hand, the inherently transitory nature of youth makes it more difficult for young people than for adults to deal with the social problems with which they are equally confronted. On the other hand, the status of social apprenticeship which characterises all young people's situations arguably entails specific risks. These considerations comprise the twin motors of youth policy and its attendant social programmes.

2.1.1 National policies as responses to the problems of young people

Policy approaches

All Community countries take, *ipso facto*, the situation of young people into political account. This does not mean that they adopt similar positions on the need for a holistic (i.e. specific, global and integrated) youth policy which is developed and managed by a specified government authority or agency designated as the competent political instance. Member States' views depend on the role assigned to the *social* sphere by established politico-cultural 'philosophies', as far as the task of socialising aneducating citizens is concerned. (19) In contrast, however, young people's *problems* are seen to be similar throughout the Community. Deviance and inequalities of opportunity are in principle the same phenomena, wherever they occur, even if their intensity and extent differ between countries,

regions and groups. When viewed in their totality across the Community and from the perspective of the actual measures adopted, these ubiquitous problems draw comparable policy responses.

In **Denmark**, young people are not the object of a specific youth policy. Membership of the social collectivity (as an integral factor of citizenship) is one of the fundamental principles of Danish society (see the earlier discussion in Part 1, section 1.1). Socialisation is firmly anchored in group life: citizens are educated *for* and *by* the collectivity. Overall, Danish social policy is well developed; young people, as a social group, have their place within social policy measures in the first instance because they are citizens (rather than because they are young). Policy priorities address and respond to those social situations which are judged as in need of particular protection and support, e.g., at present, especially old people and families with young children. Currently, entry into the labour market and delinquency are the only topics of genuine particular policy concern in relation to young people. A 'dispersed' policy and practice vis à vis young people has always been characteristic of Denmark, but, in the views of those we spoke with, there is probably also an absence of active political will to respond otherwise. The notable incidence of socially marginalised and excluded young people is one of the consequences. This is an important problem which deserves further study in a society where high levels of collective social control creates a gulf between young people falling *within* or *beyond* the bounds of social acceptability, i.e. between white and black sheep. For their part, young Danes aspire to choose for themselves what they want to do with their lives, simply requiring a little support and assistance *on request* from professionals (such as social workers or youth workers). Danish consensus holds to the principle that social policy measures are most effective (in other words: can best prevent social problems and marginalisation) where, through the provision of attractive activities and opportunites for participation, they contribute to the maintenance of the collectivity as the focus of social life. Such participation reduces delinquency and creates the basis for social networks.

Responsibility for youth affairs in **The Netherlands** rests with the Directorate for Social Affairs, located within the Ministry for Social Affairs, Health and Culture ('*MWVC*'). In turn, the Directorate contains a number of service sub-sections, amongst which is that section responsible for youth policy. It has a dual mission: firstly, to monitor government policy in relation to its implications for young people and, secondly, to organise and coordinate Dutch youth services. In this role, the section prompts and finances a number of research programmes, located both at universities and within a quasi-government agency, the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau. Other Ministries fund youth research, too, but on a smaller scale. They also have a responsibility 'in the first instance' with respect to the implications for young people of the policies formulated within their areas of competence. Therefore, the *MWVC* does not necessarily take a leading, defining role in youth policy matters. An interministerial committee for

youth policy has a modest information exchange and mutual consultation role in this connection.

Dutch political culture respects the 'sanctity' of private life, reflected in an established principle of the restriction of state intervention to the public sphere of social life. The role of the State is understood as that of offering equal rights to all social groups and of respecting the values they hold. Thus, for example, there is no Ministry or government administration responsible for the family and its affairs (which constitute the essence of private life). Where relevant, legislation and policy falling in the sphere of public concern - for example, housing, unemployment - considers its implications for families as appropriate. It is parents, however, who are accorded the principal role and responsibility in the matter of children's and young people's upbringing. Parents are seen as the principal actors and those responsible for their children's upbringing, so that these issues fall within the private sphere of family life and are not easily accessible to policy intervention. Beyond this inner circle, the *school* plays a role as a socialising context and finally, the outer circle of the *collectivity* with its leisure activities and social participation opportunities is drawn into play. This third circle is that most accessible to policy intervention, and, at the local level of social policy, an important role is ascribed to private and community organisations. Since their activities are largely state-funded, the fiscal crisis of the welfare state during the 1980s has led to difficulties and restrictions. This crisis has demonstrated the weakness of social policy in the advanced western economies and has highlighted a developing tension between regulation and deregulation. The rupture of social and political consensus on the role of the welfare state has particular consequences for young people, in that their economic vulnerability inevitably means that they are more dependent than average upon publicly funded services, income support and social activities (see the earlier discussion in Part 1, Section 1.3.1).

It would be incorrect to speak of the existence of youth policy as such in Ireland, but, nevertheless, a number of interrelated and, to some extent, co-ordinated youth policy measures have been developed. The Costello Report of the early 1980s argued the need for a specific Irish youth policy and made a series of recommendations to this end. Overall, it remains the case - arguably for financial reasons - that the action taken in response to the report has been reactive rather than proactive. Within this, policy priority continues to lie with disadvantaged youth, defined essentially as those young Irish who leave school with no qualifications. In terms of formal political responsibility, youth affairs fall within the competence of the Ministry of Education, but a conflict of competence and scope for action is created by the fact that the Ministry of Labour is responsible for youth training and job creation programmes. Such projects are, for the most part, financed through the Community Initiatives, so that the Ministry of Labour has greater avenues of funding at its disposal, whereas it is the Ministry of Education that is *de jure* responsible for youth affairs as a whole.

In **Greece**, similar tendencies are observable. National resources for developing youth policy and action are limited, and there is a certain rivalry between different government agencies over competence and sources of programme funding. Formally, the General Secretariat for Youth is responsible for youth affairs; it is a sub-section of the Directorate of International Co-operation and Information in the Ministry of Culture. The Secretariat channels Community funds for youth action programmes, which partly accounts for the centrality of vocational training in the Secretariat's policy priorities. The Secretariat would like to strengthen its role as 'policy broker' for youth affairs, mediating and co-ordinating between ministries whose own policy fields have relevance for young people's lives (such as education, employment, health, housing, etc.). A Community-wide youth policy, for which the Secretariat would be the Greek partner, would therefore be welcomed, as would Community support in establishing Greek youth research centres. One policymaker underlined that „the EC *must* converge on youth issues because either we [Europeans] have a common future, or we have no future at all." It was, in fact, the resources and direction provided through Community action programmes which have recently prompted greater Greek policy consciousness towards youth. However, other Ministries closely concerned with youth affairs may be watchful of a potential encroachment on their areas of policy competence. The Ministry of Education, for example, might well argue that it is in an appropriate position to oversee vocational training, especially within the context of educational reforms to bring curricula into closer relationship with labour market needs. This would permit the General Secretariat for Youth to concentrate its energies on other equally urgent policy priorities, such as drug abuse, AIDS and encouraging young people's productive participation in social and cultural life.

Documentation on the **United Kingdom**'s approach to youth affairs provided through the delegated national expert firmly eliminates the prospect of a youth policy role for the Commission of the European Communities. Since there is no felt need for youth policy as such at national level, the UK does not consider that the Community could have a useful role in establishing youth policy at European level. However, if in the future the UK were to perceive a need for developing specific youth policy, it would continue to oppose Community initiatives in this area, since youth affairs do not fall within the policymaking competence of the European Commission. Nevertheless, the UK is happy to co-operate in information exchange between Member States about policy relevant to young people and in youth research. It also welcomes any funds that the Community would like to invest in youth research, insofar as those projects to be supported are selected at national level and through the competent Ministry (the Department of Employment). There has been, of course, heavy investment in the reform and expansion of youth training and vocational education during the 1980s, funded both nationally and through Community programmes. These measures have been directed both centrally

from the Department of Employment, the former Manpower Services Commission and Training Agency, and regionally through local government and private enterprise training organisations.

Where the youth population is both numerous and concentrated, a specific policy on youth affairs is inescapable. In this sense, Spain is a young country: 16% of the population are aged between 15 and 24 (over 6 million persons), 50% are aged under 30, and a quarter of young Spaniards live in Madrid and Barcelona. A further quarter live in La Coruña, Malaga, Asturias, Cadiz, Biscay, Alicante, Sevilla and Valencia. Spanish youth is defined nationally as those citizens of both sexes who are aged between 15 and 30 (i.e. extending beyond the current Community definition). Youth policy is not developed in isolation, but rather within the context of larger scale social policy formulation. In the Spanish view, it is necessary to establish bridging relations across the spaces between specific policies that address the life phases of childhood, youth and adulthood.

That said, youth policy as such does exist in Spain. At the level of central government, the Interministerial Commission for Youth and Childhood is responsible for developing an integrated youth policy. The Ministry of Social Affairs presides over the Commission, in which all relevant authorities concerned with youth affairs are represented. The Ministry also provides the funding and an organisational support context for the Spanish Youth Institute (*Injuve*). Competence for youth affairs is also devolved to regional governments, the autonomous communities and urban councils, who all develop specific programmes for their areas, but for whom mechanisms for co-ordination of activities have been established. Within the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Spanish Youth Institute is an independent organisation, which promotes specific youth projects across a diverse range of activities and levels, including national and international co-operation; participation in associative life; travel, exchanges and the mobility of young people; open air and cultural activities; and information, documentation and research studies.

In some ways, the *Deutsches Jugendinstitut* (*DJI*; German Youth Institute) plays an analogous role in the FRG to that of *Injuve* in Spain. Jointly funded since the early 1960s by the federal Ministries for Women and Youth and for Education, its original mission as a policy service agency was to assist - as a formally independent organisation - in the formulation and evaluation of youth policy and its accompanying measures and services. In the 1980s, government redefinition of its role as the central youth *research* institute has led both to a higher profile *per se* for the *DJI* and to its greater significance as an intermediate commissioning agency. 70% of federal ministry youth research funding is channelled to and through the *DJI*. (Interestingly, the former GDR also supported a national youth institute [the *Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung* in Leipzig], which has now been reduced in scale and incorporated into the *DJI*.)

Nevertheless, the *DJI*'s strength still lies in its links with youth welfare services and youth work. It was the voluntary organisations, which have a very strong presence in German social and political life, that pressed for the establishment of the *DJI* and who still exercise considerable influence on its role through the institute's governing body. Youth policy has a long history in Germany, but not at a federal level. Rather, youth policy is formulated and carried through at regional and local levels of government and of voluntary organisation. This division of labour contributes to the maintenance of a more holistic approach to youth affairs, since there is, in principle, less distance between young people themselves and those who make policy decisions on their behalf. As in most Member States, however, the federal Ministry formally responsible for youth policy is not a politically 'strong' one, and it has been argued that the recent splitting of the former 'combi'-Ministry for Youth, Family, Women and Health has not improved matters. One of those we spoke with described recent developments thus:

> "Things have changed in recent years. In the past decade, there has been a paradigmatic change in social policy, rejecting the idea of an active, interventionist welfare state which responds to the needs of different groups of clients. Youth policy therefore effectively died in the 1980s. But whenever youth policy has been a priority in the past, it drew its strength from specific themes, such as equality of opportunity or unemployment. At present, we have a debate about what 'youth' is in the first place - youth has become an amorphous concept, torn up by a variety of themes, none of which is dominant. There are no key themes upon which to focus. Talking about youth policy is like talking about a chimera." (Munich meetings, 3.6.91)

Perspectives on youth affairs in France seem to be moving in the opposite direction. A number of Ministries co-ordinate policy and action relating to young French people, but within the organisation of national government the Ministry of Youth and Sport has specific responsibilities for youth affairs. It houses the Secretrariat of the Interministerial Committee for Youth, which was established in 1982 as a policy co-ordinating authority. The Secretariat's essential mission is that of proposing the measures necessary to improve young people's conditions of life. Its role was reaffirmed once more in a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister (on 22nd October 1990), which underlined the necessity for ensuring - in the interests of enhancing the overall operational efficiency of youth policy and intervention measures - the complementarity of programmes initiated through the various Ministries for their particular areas of competence.

Two years ago, Luxembourg decided (on 24th July 1989, by government declaration) to develop a holistic youth policy, whose principles and imperatives are to be reflected in all domains of economic and social life. The specific prerogatives of the Ministry for Youth do not, however, cover all the

dimensions necessary for the development and execution of such a policy. This imposes the need for active dialogue with other concerned Ministries. The forum for dialogue is the Supreme Youth Council (*Conseil Supérieure de la Jeunesse*), made up of representatives from the Ministries of Education, Justice, Health, Family, Physical Education and Sports, Labour, and Cultural Affairs, together with delegates from the General Conference of Luxembourg Youth and from youth associations. The Supreme Youth Council has three main functions: firstly, to submit youth policy proposals to the government; secondly, to offer opinions on youth affairs as requested by the government; thirdly, to advise on the measures needed to establish a National Youth Agency (as foreseen in the legislation noted above). Youth affairs in **Portugal** also fall under the remit of a number of national Ministries and regional or community level government departments (housing, health, education, training, employment, etc.). In order to implement youth policy both nationally and regionally, the Portuguese government has created a National Youth Institute, operating under the guardianship of the Secretary of State for Youth. At the regional level, current policy foresees setting up youth centres in all local districts. Similarly, the National Youth Institute is engaged in developing a decentralised youth information policy and practice. Finally, in the first instance, youth policy in **Belgium** focuses on the systematic support of voluntary associations and groups, based on the concept of life-long education. Since the Second World War, the associations recognised for these purposes have been, in the majority, those affiliated to the traditional large scale socio-political movements - in other words, relating to political, religious or social 'families'. Since 1970, smaller scale associations have emerged, often oriented to the provision of services (such as training, information, sports activities, etc.).

Policy goals

For those Member States that do have an explicit youth policy, citizenship is the anchoring concept which informs its nature and purpose. More precisely, youth policies are rooted in the idea of *socialisation for participation and for citizenship*. Specific youth policies encompass a wide variety of concrete measures, but in political terms, their ultimate goal is always young people's free, full and satisfying integration into *active social life*. In **Spain**, for example, youth policy is implemented through co-ordination of action plans and specific measures, which themselves are initiated by various public agencies and social groupings. The goal of Spanish youth policy is to secure the *insertion of young people into the existing social order*, under the best conditions possible. The principal objective of Dutch youth policy is to create appropriate conditions for young people's access to social *responsibility*. In this case, the term 'young person' refers to an individual from birth to the age of 25. Dutch society and policy do not clearly distinguish childhood and youth as separate phases of life; in the first instance, all persons are considered as citizens in their own right. Within this framework, youth policy and youth

services are responsible for providing assistance and protection to citizens passing through the different phases of developoment towards adulthood. **Portugal**, as a 'young' country, has formulated its youth policy in terms of the wish to create social space for protection and participation which will promote *education towards citizenship*.

In **Belgium** and in **France**, where youth policy and its accompanying legislation have recently been revamped, these central ideas are reflected in official documents. For example, Belgian legislation provides a renewed and expanded basis for the founding and funding of youth centres (*maisons des jeunes; Jugendhäuser*) in the following terms:

> "In consideration of the fact that a central objective of cultural policy is to foster the utilisation of free time in a perspective of *lifelong education* ... [and] that, especially for young people, leisure constitutes privileged occasions for exercising responsibilities, it is consequently important to promote the development of institutions which are susceptible to enabling young people to participate in activities oriented towards this end. ... Youth centres, open to all, free of discrimination on the grounds of beliefs, politics, sex, race or nationality, constitute an essential element of the social and cultural fostering of community, in placing at the disposal of those who frequent them the means to recognise the aptitudes they have, to develop these, and to become active, responsible and critical citizens within society ... " (Preamble to the Royal Decree of 22.10.91)

French policy statements propose that social measures adopted on behalf of young people must aim to render young people more responsible, by anchoring programmes and activities in the places where young people themselves go (i.e. youth clubs, etc.). This will increase their opportunities for decisionmaking and taking responsibility (for example, through the municipal youth councils). Young people should also be better informed on such matters as employment, occupations, environment, solidarity, housing, health and mobility; they should be encouraged to be more entrepreneurial. Here, educational input can be enhanced, in order to guide and to assist young people's initiatives in all spheres, from cultural practices and sport through to the generation of economic wealth. In achieving this aim, some four hundred existing youth and popular education associations are an important source of support. Young people equally need better training, an aspect of youth policy addressed by a Training Action Plan, in which qualifications adapted to and recognised by newly emerging occupations can be acquired, including through participation in social, cultural and sports activities. Finally, the implementation of youth policy measures should offer young people a *new citizenship*, by enabling them to acquire skills of analysis, reflection, understanding and action in social, cultural and sports life domains; by enabling them to voice their values and their aspirations for greater social

justice, and by fostering their attachment to new solidarities in preparation for 21st century citizenship. Based on an assumption of mutual solidarity between young people and the rest of society, youth policy should be progressive in the following senses: participatory, active/interactive, grassroots-centred, future-oriented and imaginatory (fostering innovation and not actionism), working through open dialogue, respectful of individual and collective liberties, and never discriminatory or excluding towards specific groups (France, documents submitted to the Research into Youth Matters Group, February 1991).

These kinds of policy statements take the view that a youth policy 'worth its name' must be visionary and innovative, whilst simultaneously carrying forward into the future those old-established 'intuitive solutions' to the question of intergenerational social relations. Such a policy strives to fill the gap between the knowledge and skills necessary for simple social survival, and those which can be learned through education for a new citizenship. In sum, a thread of social modernisation runs through this kind of policy, compensating for self-destructive social trends. It aims to facilitate a non-traumatic transition to a social future which respects social milieus and non-renewable resources, which reconsiders the relationship between work and leisure, which accepts and integrates new technologies, which promotes education for peace and tolerance, and which, above all, encourages attitudes and behaviours that favour a capacity to adapt to lifelong education and social change. In brief: the formulation and the practical implementation of youth policies must begin *from* young people and *with* young people.

Integration, co-ordination, decentralisation and youth policies

But what kinds of national realities are ensnared behind such fine words? Member States all have to consider the question of *co-ordinating* the formulation and implementation of youth policy measures. For a variety of reasons, there is an overall trend towards the decentralisation of policymaking and action. As far as political responses to social inequalities and to deviance are concerned (i.e. the central 'problems' with respect to youth, as noted earlier (p.56)), a triad of agencies is always involved: the State itself, regional/local authorities and groups, and non-governmental voluntary organisations. All three sectors operate and co-operate, in principle, on the basis of working close to, and with, young people. Differences in the ways Member States organise policy formulation and implementation appear at the level of the global integration of policy action, i.e. who has designated competence and authority in youth policy affairs, who arbitrates between interested parties, and - perhaps - what fundamental conceptions underly the aims and means of national youth policies. So, for example, we find differing emphases in explanations of policy perspectives:

"Youth policies must be integrated into other policy domains, in that the needs of young people are [equally] housing, employment, etc. The general tendency of the Danish government is to decentralise, whereas to create a specific domain for youth policy would be a step towards centralisation. The Danish Youth Council has always argued against the creation of a Youth Ministry. What is desired, rather, is a coherent co-ordination of policies concerning young people, and not an integrated policy." (Copenhagen meetings, 23.4.91)

"French youth policy accords particular importance to the social integration and insertion of young people. In order to do so, it relies on bringing together the relevant associations, regional/local groups, and all other concerned partners. The prerequisite for formulating state youth policy is that young people's own expectations should be listened and attended to. In order to respond to this imperative, we are in the process of creating an *observatoire* within the National Institute of Youth and Popular Education. This will be a tool both for discovering what young people think and how they behave, and for disseminating what we find, our experiences with young people in doing so, and our reflections upon this knowledge and experience." (Paris meetings, 24.5.91)

"The Youth Plan of the Asturias rests on two central principles: firstly, reinforcing vertical and horizontal coordination; secondly, integrating the Plan into the 'grand axes' of government policy, i.e. economic policy, modernisation, improvement of the quality of life, equality of chances, and the rebalancing of regional inequalities." (*Politica integral de Juventud*, Dossier No.6, 1989, p.6)

Reference to the role of voluntary associations appears in all youth policies or in social policies which specifically concern youth. In effect, it is these groupings and agencies which historically provide and manage youth work. In all Community countries, they perform a dual institutional role. Firstly, they constitute the framework for activities *for* and *by* young people. As such, these associations are the foundation stone of socio-educative and 'socio-therapeutic' work with young people. Secondly, voluntary organisations represent young people within local, regional, national and international political fora. This dual role as actor and representative, however necessary it may be, contains ambiguities, and this report cannot offer a full tableau or analysis of the positive and negative implications involved. The important point to bear in mind is that youth associations and voluntary organisations *have* (varying amounts of) power, but are not *in* power; and they are *of* youth without comprising *all* youth.

As an example of the involvement of voluntary organisations in youth policy strategies, whilst associative life in Portugal is by no means a new phenomenon, it is enjoying a period of strong development at the present time. The government offers funding to assist programmes of activities and

investment by such groups. Since 1990, funding support criteria favour youth work organisations that plan to operate and develop activities taking place outside working hours (evenings, weekends, etc.). Such organisations are not funded on the basis of per capita participation, but rather on the age range of those who take part and who take on management roles or tasks. The continuation of public funding is contingent upon qualitative and quantitative democratic evaluation procedures (which form part of annual programme contracts). In turn, the government administrations responsible for the disbursement of funds are themselves accountable to the National Youth Council and the National Youth Church Council (in the form of annual reports).

In **Denmark**, a country with a very strong associative tradition, voluntary organisations are essentially a medium for offering particular social, cultural and leisure activities to their members, who are drawn from all sectors of society. Over time, the dependence of such organisations upon public funding has increased, which has prompted some concern about the implications for their autonomy of action. At the same time, levels of participation are apparently decreasing, though interest in sport as a specific associational activity is increasing. Almost all Danes, young people included, practice some form of sport, and they largely do so via associations, although recent studies suggest that the patterns of sports participation are shifting too. For example, young people, especially boys, are less interested in traditional team sports and are more attracted to individualised, 'exciting' and modern sports. (Overall, boys' participation in associations is decreasing, whereas girls' participation is increasing.) In **Belgium**, too, a recent study indicates the need to redefine youth centres' perspectives and purposes, since there would appear to be a gap between their existing approaches and aims and young people's own preferences. In concert with such trends, current Belgian youth policy prioritises the support of local initiatives and of projects that are founded upon the dual principles of partnership and innovation. Finally, in **Ireland**, voluntary organisations are currently looking at a reclarification of the distinction between 'youth work' and 'youth services'. Given the problems posed for the young Irish by a struggling 'peripheral' economy and high rates of emigration, youth organisations find themselves providing care and assistance to the young 'accident cases' of this situation. They ask themselves to what extent this role is appropriate and justified - to what extent do they thereby release the state from its responsibilities to secure an improvement in the quality of life and life chances for young people?

In response to the problem of declining participation rates, recent Danish leisure policy legislation aims to promote self/joint management for youth association members aged 13 and older. Policymakers and youth work practitioners take the view that the provision of activities has become 'too organised', and that this has resulted in a decline in participation rates. If opportunities for decisionmaking and action are returned to young people themselves, it is argued, they will automatically organise and

involve themselves anew. Danish legislation, of all kinds, begins from the principle of encouraging a *socially engaged* integration; and, despite current concerns, participation in associative life remains the highest in Europe. The risk of over-institutionalisation remains, whereas young people themselves patently seek the freedom to make their own choices under their own steam. It would seem that the activities that interest today's young people no longer tally with the underlying philosophy of current policy, in which 'organised' cultural life is seen as an instrument for the prevention of deviance, marginalisation and weak social integration. (There are now some examples of youth projects whose funding is contingent on meeting specified criteria in this respect, for example, securing a given proportion of participants from social risk groups.)

The 1980s have also seen a significant mobilisation of voluntary organisations in the effort to expand young people's participation in vocational training and to assist their entry into the world of work. Both national governments and the European Social Fund have made large scale funding available to set up programmes for vocational guidance, training and labour market insertion, and to found job creation and enterprise schemes as intermediaries between young people and the labour market. In this way, too, voluntary organisations working with young people have been 'diverted' from their traditional objectives and activities through their incorporation as an instrument of larger social and economic policy. In turn, this shift has resulted their greater dependency on public funding; it also poses the question of the redefinition of 'youth work' and 'youth services.' Many such organisations are now directly involved in the qualification and training of young people - especially for the disadvantaged. At the same time, they exercise an important 'therapeutic' role in prevention, rehabilitation and educative leisure for young people caught up in social problems and at risk. From the point of view of the voluntary organisations and associations, this policy-led expansion of their activities confers a new legitimation for their existence and their access to public funding. At the same time, they ask themselves whether this new involvement, however urgent the need for it, does not in fact deflect their energies from the task of social and cultural development, the traditional *raison d'être* of youth work.

It is impossible within the scope of this report to offer a detailed account and analysis of all the activities and services that are offered to young people today. They might be summarised into six broad categories of provision, under which specific programmes are offered through central government schemes and regional/local intiatives or by voluntary organisations of all kinds. These categories are:

*the transition from school to work : guidance services, vocational training, job creation schemes, intermediate enterprises, employer subsidies, enterprise schemes, advice centres ...

*promoting better conditions and quality of life for young people : health, consumer, housing, and social services ...

*promoting young people's participation in social, cultural, sport, leisure, travel/exchange activities...

*the prevention of marginality, deviance, and delinquency ...

*youth workers' training, qualification and in-service programmes ...

*information, documentation, studies and publications for all the above.

Examples of specific responses

The scale and range of provision, together with the variety of agencies involved in youth work and youth services, has resulted in an understandable policymaking preoccupation with questions of coherence, co-ordination and convergence of objectives and their implementation. Some innovative solutions have emerged. The French proposal to establish a youth *observatoire* is an example; the FRG, Spain, and Portugal also have national centres for youth research. For the countries in which they exist, these kinds of institutions could (and to some extent already do) play a role in the documentation of youth research and policy affairs; in the stimulation of youth research sensitive to social change and to policymaking needs; and in the promotion of communication and exchange programmes between young people and youth workers. A further example of innovation might be the Integrated Youth Plans developed in Spain's autonomous regions, which facilitate coherence and co-operation between the various agencies involved in implementing action programmes. These Plans also place youth policy firmly within a holistic framework, i.e., they do not consider young people's problems as separate issues (housing, employment, training, ...), but rather focus upon a single composite problem in the transition towards adulthood: that of prolonged adolescence. Portugal's Projecto Vida (Project Life), a programme focussed on the problem of drug abuse, similarly attempts to provide a resources and information network and a framework of partnership between all the agencies involved in this field of youth work.

These examples show, in other words, that co-ordination, partnership and networking are key terms in the formulation and implementation of youth work and youth services. A concern to establish effective administration and communication channels is reflected both in youth policy legislation and in the criteria and mechanisms of funding.

The limits of social policy

However Member States' governments have chosen to address the problems of effective youth policy implementation, the outcomes of their efforts are ultimately limited by the very nature of young people's circumstances in the first place. Even where positive concepts such as personal growth, cultural development and citizenship inform youth policy and provision, in practice, young people's disaffection with associative life and public institutions cannot be denied. So, for example, the education and training reforms of the last decade might be regarded as having been successful: young people's skill and qualification levels have, in general, risen. The overriding aim of these reforms was, of course, to improve young people's job opportunities. In fact, where labour market conditions *have* improved, the reasons have little to do with the fact that young people today are better educated and better trained than ever before. In other words, the state of the labour market is beyond the scope of influence of youth education and training policy, however successful it may be in its own terms. A certain disaffection with schooling and youth training schemes on the part of young people is hardly surprising under these circumstances.

Similarly, youth policy measures may be able to equalise young people's opportunities for access to independent housing (insofar as this exists), but such measures can have little influence on the property market itself - and even less on the motivations and behaviour of buyers, sellers, landlords and tenants. This does not mean that policy action cannot improve young people's housing situations at all; expanded provision of council and temporary housing suited to young people's needs would certainly help here. Young people's housing needs and preferences are contingent upon both economic and cultural factors, as in the case of **Luxembourg**, where owning one's own house is not only a majority practice (for over three-quarters of the population) but also a significant criterion of adult status. Depending on how long they continue with their education, all young Luxembourgers must, at some point between their late teens and late twenties, solve the problem of house purchase (generally with the assistance of taxation and parental subsidies). The problem is not that young people have nowhere to live; the parental home or hostels (*foyers*) ensure they have somewhere to stay. It is the strong desire for independent owner-occupation that informs their perspectives; all else is a palliative solution (and see Part 1, section1.3.2).

Social policy in general displays little grasp of young people's contemporary circumstances, as in the case of the relationships between schooling and socio-economic change, a problem raised in a number of Member States - for example:

> "Youth is a factor in the process of social modernisation. Since the 1960s, the traditional ways in which generations pass through a sequence of roles and statuses have been gradually silting up. Today, there is a discrepancy between that which is taught [in the schools] and that which will be necessary for life tomorrow." (Spain, documents submitted to the Research into Youth Matters Group, February 1991)

This observation would find an appreciative echo across much of the Community. Is the pace of social change now too rapid for schooling to keep up? Does schooling provide an 'apprenticeship for life'? Once schooling extends to the point that many of the pupils are no longer children, what are the consequences for their orientations to an education that continues to pay little attention to 'life after school'? The responses to these questions across the Community are by no means similar. Indeed, some countries face the prospect of a post-1992 Europe with confidence as far as their educational systems are concerned. The **Danish**, for example, are inclined to see their schooling provision and practice as well attuned to the needs of the future: it is a flexible, open system, but equally one which insists upon a firm grounding in modern foreign language acquisition and which fosters self-confidence. The strength of associative life also means that the majority of young people regularly spend time in groups, participating in activities where competition and individual achievement do not play a significant role; they can more readily develop a sense of positive self-worth which is not dependent upon how well they perform in the classroom.

The prospect of increased rates of voluntary and involuntary *mobility* in the future is one of the issues that underlies concerns about the appropriateness and effectiveness of schooling systems. Mobility is at the forefront of Community policy concern; the positions and perspectives of the Member States with respect to this issue are very different indeed. They deserve a much more detailed analysis than this report can provide. What is clear, however, is that all Member States welcome the Commission's youth exchange and travel initiatives, and would like to see further expansion of their scope. There is also general agreement that the young people who have largely benefited from such programmes are those who are least in need of them, so that the focus of concern now lies in finding ways of encouraging and facilitating the participation of less privileged youth. The Youth Card is a seen as welcome asset in improving the quality and range of youth services, although the style of its introduction differs considerably across the Community. (In **Greece**, for example, the Youth Card is managed, in the first instance, as a commercial enterprise; in **France**, the Youth Card is a key element in a 'hightech' youth information service. In **The Netherlands**, youth information services are based on personalised counselling, and the Youth Card is seen as an important tool for encouraging young people to participate in cultural and educational activities.) A further point of concern about mobility is that Community geography inevitably brings inequalities in the costs of youth travel and exchange. The

geographically peripheral Member States and regions (with the exception of Denmark) are also those with far fewer national funds at their disposal.

The solutions for increasing and equalising opportunities for voluntary youth mobility are, in principle, straightforward. Involuntary mobility is another matter altogether, as in the case of emigration from Ireland, Portugal and Greece. Again, this is a structural problem that youth policy measures cannot resolve, although they might respond more proactively to the fact that large numbers of young migrants populate many of the Community's conurbations. In Ireland, the 1980s have seen a worsening mismatch between supply and demand in the youth labour market: demand continues at a depressed level, whilst the supply of increasingly well qualified young people remains high. In contrast with the rest of the Community, Ireland will continue to have large cohorts of young people arriving into the labour market for some time to come. The policy solution has been, and continues to be, to encourage as many young people as possible to stay in the education system as long as possible - but, as noted earlier (see Part 1, section 1.3.4), the main effect has been credential inflation rather than higher rates of labour market absorption:

> "Relatively speaking, those who abandon their schooling early are pushed to the margins of the labour market more than in other Member States. Entry requirements at all levels have been pushed upwards. ... The Irish situation is truly unique, and the exportability of qualifications is crucial. [It is crucial that] Irish qualifications are recognised elsewhere - most particularly in the UK, since this is where the majority of Irish youth goes to find work." (Dublin meetings, 25.3.91)

The processes of transition and adaptation to living and working away from the culture and country in which they have grown up are, therefore, an important issue for youth research and policy in the coming years - not only for the peripheral Member States, but for the Community as a whole.

Social policy's preoccupations with young people converge, in the end, upon *précarité*, a term which effectively describes the social situation of those whose lives are marked by multiple and interacting cumulative disadvantage: difficult schooling experience, poor qualifications, uncertain employment opportunities, restricted and poor housing options, etc. It is the young *précares* who drop out of school soon after transfer to secondary school and spend their days as passive visual media consumers; who e/migrate before they reach the age of 18; who take poorly paid, transient jobs with no training opportunities; who become absorbed into the family's domestic economy and slide into teenage parenthood. (All these examples were offered to us in discussion with youth researchers from various Community countries.) For these young people, the youth phase is a trajectory of proletarianisation,

in which the failure to negotiate 'safely and successfully' the process of transition to adulthood becomes a history of the accumulation of social disadvantage. Policy measures themselves may contribute to the process:

> "It is in the domain of the labour market that there is the most segregation between young people. In Denmark, young people have first to work in order to acquire social rights, this being a condition of participation in Danish society as a citizen in one's own right. But it is possible to oscillate between training and job creation programmes without ever becoming truly integrated into the labour market. The interactions between central and local government each play a role in this. For example, they have differing interests in allocating individuals onto the unemployment list or onto the list of 'early pensioners' (which you can theoretically join from the age of 25) according to who is responsible for paying the relevant benefits." (Copenhagen meetings, 22.4.91)

To recapitulate: youth policies, where these exist, are constructed around the goals of acculturation, citizenship and insertion into the social order. The achievement of these aims is placed within a perspective of popular education, which is oriented towards promoting responsibility and towards fostering individual and social progress. Historically, voluntary organisations have been key links in the implementation of youth policies. Today, with a revised and expanded role, they are no less important, and arguably even more so. Beyond this, contemporary youth policies in the Community share three features. They are all concerned, firstly, to achieve young people's labour market integration; secondly, to protect the young against major social risks and to prevent deviance/ delinquency; and, thirdly, to offer information and guidance to young people in the period of transition to adulthood.

2.1.2 Youth research in the Member States

Youth research, in terms of its scale and sophistication, is most well-developed in France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and (West) Germany. In some cases (most notably Germany), youth research has a long established specialist tradition; in others (for example Portugal), it is of very recent origin. Youth research is also much more highly institutionalised in some countries (such as Spain) than in others (such as in the UK). In Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and The Netherlands, youth research takes place on a lesser scale - which is not surprising, in the sense that these are the smaller Community countries. But whilst the scale of youth research may be modest, its 'quality' may still be high (as in the case of The Netherlands). A lively tradition of youth research can

develop even where, as a specialism, it does not attract a high level of institutional and funding support (as in Denmark). Whatever their current situation, we found enthusiasm and interest in all Member States for developing the scope and quality of youth research, both in their countries and on a comparative basis. Predictably, funding, poor institutional support frameworks and, for comparative work, lack of professional networks and relevant skills are the major constraints. Individual and national ambition provide, of course, strong motivations to develop specialist research fields. It is equally so that all those involved in youth affairs recognise the need for a better informed basis for formulating and implementing youth policy and social policy relevant to young people.

Initial reference points

Whilst there is indisputably a recognisable body of youth research in Europe, 'European youth research' as such does not yet exist, either intellectually or institutionally. All Member States can provide examples of researchers who have contributed to the development of the field, nationally and internationally, but many have worked in comparative isolation or from within more well established specialisms (such as developmental psychology, history, or in sociology of education). This isolation and indistinctness of youth research as a specialist field continues, to differing extents, in perhaps the majority of Community countries. (It is particularly noticeable, for example, in Greece.) In sum, whilst researchers everywhere have been working for decades on youth questions, in only the fewest of Member States can we point to an established specialist youth research tradition which reaches further back than the past twenty years or so. It does seem to be the case that '1968' lent a renewed impetus to youth research. To put matters succinctly - at the risk of oversimplification - this socio-political 'jolt to the system' forced the question: „What is this youth whose revolt challenges us?" The attempts to respond to this question led to a rising interest in youth research and to the development of interdisciplinary youth research as a professional identity and an increasingly 'organised' specialism.

We begin with some brief thumbnail sketches of the features of youth research as a specialism in the Member States. In **Denmark**, a series of policymaking milestones mark the recent development of the field. From the early 1970s onwards, the Humanities Research Council maintained a secretariat for youth research. In 1984, a government commission report underlined the need for more youth research; the relevant Danish research funding council then accorded youth research priority status through to 1987. In 1989 the Ministry of Social Affairs published its own report on the situation of children and young people in Denmark; and, most recently, in 1990 the co-ordinating committee for youth policy affairs published its suggestions for further research on childhood and youth. There is, however, no national institute specifically for youth research. The Social Research Institute has a much

wider brief, and there is more funding available for research into social problems relating to children than to young people. Neither are there any professorial chairs for youth studies in Danish universities, and university-based youth researchers are likely to be working in professionally isolated situations. Danish youth researchers have developed strong co-operative links within the Nordic network, which currently lends strong momentum to the development of the field.

Youth research in Spain has a longer tradition and is more formally institutionalised; it is classified as a sociological specialism, and its body of knowledge is largely drawn from quantitative surveys. The first National Survey of Spanish youth was conducted in 1960; the eleventh in 1989. The first 'epoch' of youth research in Spain covered the last fifteen years of the Franco dictatorship, drawing to a close on his death in 1975. Amongst other things, it was the régime's anxiety about Spanish youth as a source of political unrest that had prompted the first youth surveys. The values of a highly traditional Mediterranean culture and society were reflected in the very definition of youth during this period: young people were exclusively males, who reached official adulthood at the point of entry to National Service at the age of 20/21. Young women of any age were not formally classified as young people at all, but were rather dealt with under a carefully separate set of policies. A second phase of development, from the mid-1970s through to the mid-1980s, parallels the non-violent transition to a modern European democracy, involving a reorientation of youth research perspectives and purposes. At present, Spanish youth research is enjoying a period of resurgence as a consequence of rapid social and economic modernisation, in which young people's situations and prospects are regarded as important factors to consider for the future well being of society and economy. As a consequence of the early institutionalisation within state agencies, there is a national institute specifically for youth research. In addition, a considerable amount of youth research is conducted by private research groups and in the universities (although, as in Denmark, this work takes place under the aegis of established disciplines rather than in specialist units).

Whilst the German youth research tradition reaches back at least to the turn of the century, the modern specialism was established in the 1950s and 1960s as a result of significant research investment from the United States and from the Shell oil company. The Federal Welfare Act provides for federally-funded quadrennial *Jugendberichte* (national youth reports), which have been conducted since the mid-1960s. These surveys may seek a general picture of young people's lives and perspectives (as in the Fifth Report in 1980), or they may focus on a particular theme. The Sixth Report, in 1984, directed its attention to the improvement of opportunities for girls; the 1990 (Eighth) Report looked at the role and the functioning of youth services. These surveys, then, follow lines of policy concern and priority, and their scale means that they do exercise influence on the preoccupations and activities of the youth

research community as a whole. The *DJI* similarly plays a certain focussing role, but there are in fact many public and private organisations and institutions that fund and conduct youth research. This means that there is a wide-ranging, differentiated terrain of youth research activity, much of which is institutionally organised, but under *diverse* umbrellas (see here: Hübner-Funk, n.d.).

In contrast, both France and the UK have significant youth research communities, but, until now, youth research itself has neither been formally institutionally organised or specifically funded on a large scale. France is now moving in this direction with the plan to establish a national youth *observatoire*, whose precise future role and influence therefore remains to be seen; until now, there has been no organisation that federates French youth research. Both universities and central government funded social science research institutes (e.g. *CNRS; CNDS; CEREQ; INSEE*) have contributed to the youth research literature. *CEREQ* (*Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Qualifications*), for example, was founded in the early 1980s, in response to youth unemployment and the problematics of education-labour market transitions. Its brief is to study the politics of employment, entry and progress in the labour market, patterns of continuing education and training, and career development. To this end, *CEREQ* conducts, for example, longitudinal surveys of schoolleavers. Hence, *CEREQ* does not conduct youth research per se, but rather makes a thematically specific contribution to the field from outside. Accordingly, the French government has invested considerable funding in youth research, but in a rather dispersed fashion. From this perspective, the logic of establishing an *observatoire* might be viewed as a rationalisation measure. No analagous trends are observable in the UK, where youth research is not specifically singled out for significant direct or indirect resourcing, whether from the government, voluntary organisations or independent funding agencies. In this sense, the strength of the youth research literature (*not* the research community in itself) is remarkable. There is, however, one area that has received enormous policy attention from the end of the 1970s: education-labour market transitions. This topic effectively defined the empirical field during the 1980s, especially since research funding for the social sciences generally became scarce.

Luxembourg has no indigenous systematic tradition of youth research as a research specialism, although surveys are conducted from time to time as required by specific policymaking processes, or when 'piggy back' opportunities present themselves. In this case, the very small population base together with the absence of higher education institutions in Luxembourg itself are obvious explanatory factors. Youth research in The Netherlands, however, has developed rapidly in the past decade, including the establishment of university chairs in youth studies as well as the funding of a series of projects (especially action research in school-to-work transitions). In addition, the government-funded Social and Cultural Planning Bureau conducts (amongst many other kinds of studies)

intermittent surveys of young people, although there is, as yet, no permanent specialist unit for this area. Both the Dutch Youth Policy Council and the co-ordinating committee for youth research funding (under the aegis of the Ministry responsible for youth affairs) explicitly work to the principles of participation and complementarity between decisionmakers, practitioners and researchers. Whilst everyone concerned would like more funding to be available for youth research, there seems to be a genuine consensus that all parties positively support the further development of the field.

In sum: youth studies is a field of research characterised by quite disparate levels of development and professional organisation in the European Community countries. Modern interdisciplinary youth research is of recent origin everywhere. It has begun to take on a specialist identity of its own as a consequence of the urgent need to respond to youth protest and feminist movements, to the problems of youth unemployment, and to the persistence of social inequalities in young people's life chances.

Describing youth research

Viewed over the long term, the point of gravity of youth research has shifted. What would today be termed as cultural youth studies has been increasingly displaced during the past decade by socio-economic surveys and analyses of the transition to adulthood. The origins of youth research lay in studying such topics as generational conflicts; adolescent identity development; young people's relations with established social institutions (the family, the Church, the polity etc.); values, attitudes and patterns of behaviour; subcultures and deviance; social participation and political socialisation; etc. During the 1970s, studies of youth cultures and ideologies gave a renewed impetus to the theoretical development of the field. However, the transition from education to the labour market had always formed a separate, relatively independent strand of youth research. With rising youth unemployment and the consequent 'crisis' in education and training, accentuated by the growth of new technologies and structural shifts in the advanced economies, research focussing around such issues naturally became highly prominent. Many would now agree that youth research in the 1980s became too narrowly focussed on school-to-work questions. The current trend is towards a much wider and interrelated approach to youth transitions, together with renewed interest in young people's lifestyles in the context of rapidly changing communication technologies.

Mauger's (forthcoming) classification of youth research into empirical and theoretical branches helps to describe the contemporary scope of the field. Empirical studies may focus on young people as specific social groups (for example, the young unemployed, second generation immigrants, sixthformers). They may focus on sets of social practices which are characteristic for young people (for

example, drug usage, music subcultures); or they may explore young people's relations with social institutions (such as schooling). Theoretical approaches to understanding 'youth' may focus upon the question of generation (for example, processes of cultural and economic inheritance, individual and cohort mobility, definitive features of a particular 'generation'). Alternatively, they may take a political perspective on youth in society (for example, analysing specialised agencies for youth affairs, considering the role of youth work professionals, describing and interpreting young people's rights and obligations). Finally, youth might be considered as a social movement or as a subculture in itself (as in studies of the production of cultural identity).

A simple taxonomy of youth research themes, on the other hand, results in a long list of 'topics' such as youth and the life cycle, education, the labour market, the marriage market, politics, lifestyles, [and ...]; youth in historical perspective, as a social category, as generation, [and ...]. Youth researchers themselves are inclined to remark that, in its current state, the subject matter is so dispersed that it is impossible to offer an exhaustive account of its coverage. The documents furnished by the national experts tend to substantiate this view; *grosso modo*, young people's lives *as a totality* are effectively hidden - in all Community countries. Rather, we find that particular aspects of youth and young people's lives are studied in relation to a single social domain or a single social attribute. Hence, young people's values might be surveyed in relation to (one of) family, education, sexuality, paid work, money, housing, leisure, religion, science and new technology, national vs regional vs European identity, politics, society in the future, etc. Those countries in which regular youth surveys are conducted (for example, in Spain and in the FRG) do cover a range of domains and attributes. There are also scattered examples of nationally based surveys which attempt to build up composite pictures of young people's lives and values, cross-sectionally and over time (for example, the National Child Development Study in the UK, the SHELL Surveys in the FRG, the IARD surveys in Italy).

Since education, training and employment has been (and remains) *the* major national social policy theme in relation to young people, large numbers of studies focus on such topics as school drop-out, formal and informal structuring of education, training and labour market integration processes, evaluating the impact of support measures, and so on. To this end, regular or intermittent surveys of schoolleavers have been established in some countries (for example, in England & Wales, France, Ireland and Scotland). But the transition from schooling to un/employment is not the only 'social problem' faced by young people. Increasingly, research attention has focussed on young people's situations, attitudes and expectations in relation to regional, ethnic/racial, religious, cultural and gender differences. Such issues are of concern in and for themselves (as in studies of gendered socialisation processes, regional cultures and the plurality of lifestyles, the lives of young immigrants),

but they may equally be introduced as differentiating factors in studies whose focus lies elsewhere (for example, ethnic/racial and sex discrimination in vocational training and employment, post-school youth in urban vs rural areas, regional variations in young people's life-plans and expecations for their future, the evaluation of multicultural/anti-sexist curriculum projects as a strategy for improving the educational opportunities of minority group youth).

Young people not only have to face social problems such as those listed above, but they may themselves become 'part of' a social problem as a consequence of the social situation in which they have grown up, or of the social practices they have adopted. All Community countries produce much applied research and evaluation in this field, covering such topics as toxicodependence, health and sexuality (especially AIDS, teenage pregnancy/abortion), delinquency, the juvenile criminal justice system, the effects of single parenthood, 'vagabondism' (for example, runaways and *Straßenkinder*), therapy and counselling services for socially disturbed adolescents, etc. In Community countries where youth research as a specialist field is relatively underdeveloped (such as in Greece and Ireland), these kinds of studies are inclined to dominate: where resources are restricted, efforts are concentrated upon urgent problems.

Finally, socio-educative and socio-cultural activities constitute a significant field of investigation. Such studies may begin from the vantage point of the providers (i.e. youth services, associations, centres, clubs, etc.) or of the client-consumers (i.e. young people). They cover such topics as young people's expectations and preferences for where and how they can meet together, obtain information and guidance, or take part in leisure activities; analysing young people's needs on the basis of their actual patterns of behaviour, of cultural production and consumption; rates and patterns of young people's participation and engagement in associative, political and cultural life; patterns of self-organisation of social and leisure activities amongst the young; the qualification of youth workers as professionals and voluntary workers, etc.

European youth research: identifying information sources and gaps

We discussed the patchy and problematic quality of both quantitative and qualitative data for studying the situation of young people in the European Community earlier in this report (see Part 1, section 1.1). In addition to the sparse availability of appropriate material for comparative purposes, the picture at national level is not necessarily much better. Only a minority of Member States can point to a significant body of qualitative studies (most notably, Denmark, The Netherlands and the UK). Generally speaking, survey data of various kinds are more plentiful (as noted earlier). The main difficulty, however, is that for many topics, researchers must rely on sociodemographic data collected for

purposes other than studying young people's circumstances and experiences. The Luxembourg Income Study, for example, could offer a useful source of information on young people's financial circumstances, but its primary purpose is the study of families and households. Sources of information are thus often dispersed across a wide range of Ministry reports, government statistical series, programme monitoring and evaluation files, and so forth. For example, Member States' education ministries collect a wide range of statistics related to all aspects of schooling, and they also commission surveys to this end (for example, CENSIS recently completed a study of education in Italy for the Ministry of Public Education). But it is not necessarily possible to link this information with labour force statistics; and this is one reason why surveys such as the UK's Youth Cohort Study were developed in the 1980s. Information supplied by the UK national expert to the Research into Youth Matters Group about sources of available data for youth research gives the flavour of the current situation in much of the Community:

> "...we consulted several government [Ministries ... and] leading voluntary organisations ... as well as private market research companies ... Due to the range of information and data available, our 'map' concentrates on larger completed projects and/or those carried out at regular intervals. ... There are several major sources of information [on school/training/work/unemployment, for example] the Youth Cohort Study, the Scottish Young People's Survey, the ESRC 16-19 Initiative and the National Child Development Study (NCDS), ... also the Labour Force Survey (LFS). ... Statistics on the housing situation of young people ... are collected through large-scale representative household based surveys such as the LFS and the General Household Survey (GHS). ... Information on young people's earnings are collected by the GHS ... and also ... by the New Earnings Survey. ... A recent study of 18-34 year olds undertaken by Market and Opinion Research International Limited provides data on whether an individual moved elsewhere in Britain in the previous year, to get a better job. ... A recent Department of Employment Research Paper considered the Career Service's work with young people from ethnic minorities as they left school and entered the labour market. ... The Home Office regularly publish crime statistics ... [but] the age ranges will not necessarily coincide with the 16-24 definition of 'youth.' ... The GHS biennially collects data on the drinking habits of those over the age of 18. .... The NCDS also provides information on drinking alcohol between the ages of 16 and 23. ... The Office of Population Censuses and Surveys have carried out two ... surveys of drinking habits ... which included large samples in the 16-24 age range. They have also undertaken a survey of 13-17 year olds. ... A regular 'Drugs Monitor' tracking survey is commissioned by the Central Office of Information in conjunction with the Department of Health. This annually surveys a sample of approximately 700 13-20 year olds. ..." (Extracts from the UK Report to the Research into Youth Matters Group, 1.11.90)

Researchers also underlined the 'blindness' of much statistical data, and remarked that these cannot address analysis at the institutional level (as opposed to at the level of individuals and groups of individuals). The term 'exclusion', for example, is defined by default. How is it possible to make sense of dimensions of exclusion such as analaphabetism, school failure, labour market marginality, and poor well-being, beyond their manifestation at the individual level? As far as schooling is concerned, what are the *genuine* participation rates, *who* are the young people excluded and *who* are those who participate (voluntarily) in schooling?

There is unanimity across the Community that current sources of data are inadequate and non-comparable; and there is a universal plea for better documentation of what is available, both at national level and for comparative purposes:

> "The research community deplores, with a certain unanimity, the inadequacy of statistical sources. It is necessary to provide the means for 'stockpiling' the data in a way which will open it up for comparisons both at national and Community level. The decision to establish an *observatoire* is an initiative towards this end, in which the administration, researchers and practitioners will co-operate together." (Paris meetings, 25.4.91)

> "A major difficulty is that of compiling information. The different compilers each follow their own plan for doing so, so that much of the data is non-comparable." (Dublin meetings, 25.3.91)

> "The studies underway or being proposed by this or that university are not usable because they are not inventoried." (Brussels meetings, 27.3.91)

> "Insofar as this is possible, it would be useful to collate the information, documentation and those data that are complete and comparable on the architecture of social policies for youth, both those of an integrated character and in different policy sectors, for the twelve Member States. This would enable us to identify the possible intervention strategies for fostering the integration of youth policies adopted by one or the other Member State, in order to promote the full utilisation of human and financial resources invested in youth affairs through the Commission. ... [For example, we have no information on:] the institutional structures through which each Member State implements interventions on behalf of young people, from guidance to prevention of marginalisation; the organisation of youth associations and their representativeness; the laws, regulations and procedures concerning the guardianship of minors; the legal and social rights of young people after the end of compulsory schooling. These topics could be taken up by a European research and analysis panel. ... It is difficult to get access to data concerning [such matters as] the intra-Community mobility patterns of

> young Europeans; toxicodependency and marginalisation, young people's social participation and associationism (especially for higher education students), and young people's housing conditions." (Italy, documents submitted to the Research Into Youth Matters Group, 1990/1)

Even where material is available and accessible, researchers underline the fact that research data on young people's lives have a short 'shelf life', so that our knowledge and understanding rapidly becomes out of date:

> "The statistical bases, the quantitative data on such topics as drugs and delinquency are dynamic in quality. One observes that delinquency is changing its form, it is more individualistic, more 'gratuitous', that there is a link between drug consumption and the increase in delinquency, but this terrain remains largely unexplored in research terms." (Brussels meetings, 27.3.91)

The dynamic, transitory quality of youth research as a body of knowledge is typically reflected in the professional situations of youth researchers themselves. The series of problems listed by Danish researchers in this connection are not specific to Denmark alone, but are typical for much (though not all) of the Community. They pointed to: the 'invisibility' of youth research as a specialism; a lack of co-operation between researchers and those who use research findings; the professional isolation and insecurity of youth researchers; a lack of continuity of personnel and of sustained research on given topics; an absence of formal links between research and the training of youth workers; and an underdeveloped professional communications infrastructure (networks, journals, etc.). It was universally felt that this is an area in which the Commission could offer considerable assistance; as one British researcher remarked: „Please, please, could we just get to know who is doing what, where, and how we can get hold of the information that there is available in the rest of Europe!"

2.1.3 Interrelations between policy and research at the national level

The current state of play

An initial review of the themes that have occupied youth researchers in recent decades leads to the conclusion that the changing preoccupations of social and youth policy have exercised a decisive influence upon the development of the field. Policy influences the orientation of research both directly (through commissioned studies) and indirectly (through prompting and guiding researchers' own

interests and through funding priorities). In the 1960s, policymakers were faced with generations of young people who themselves redefined 'youth' as both different from and oppositional to existing norms and values. The 1970s were first characterised by consciously consumerist and lifestyle-oriented young people, gradually giving way by the 1980s to a youth confronted and weighed down by a range of social problems - both those with which they personally had to struggle and those they wanted to 'do something about'.

In reality, of course, both policy and research are influenced by social trends themselves; and relations between research and policy are reciprocal. Youth research findings can and do influence policymaking, most readily in those Member States that have developed specific youth policy and the communication and liaison structures that accompany it.

For example, the Belgian National Youth Bureau for the French community explicitly seeks information from youth research for a number of purposes. In order to reflect upon current youth policy and to formulate the directions of future policy, research offers information on young people's ideas, values, expectations and needs. It can also provide the tools for evaluating policy measures, for assessing the adequacy of proposed programmes and activities in meeting policy aims, etc. To this end, researchers are given precise contracts by the Bureau, which is also currently developing its research channels and links. Where research studies are undertaken in the universities, independently of these channels, their findings remain under-used, because they are not readily and systematically accessible.

> "The Administration does have precise requests, for example, what is the current participation rate of young people in associations? We also have various 'works in progress', for example, with the Youth Protection Service on alternative forms of sanctions, on prevention of delinquency and deviance in social risk neighbourhoods, and on alternative housing measures. The Administration no longer finances studies conducted by youth associations. It prefers to suggest university-based research and in doing so, it sets precise criteria for ensuring the comparability of data. The Administration is interested in further developing its links with research, both to gain access to work that has already been done and respect to conducting future studies. On the whole, the relations between the Administration, practitioners and researchers are unstructured and rather anarchic." (Brussels meetings, 28.3.91)

In the UK, there appears to be some lack of understanding about what social research in general can achieve and contribute to policymaking. Youth research as such is not a well defined field in relevant policymaking circles, which are inclined to focus on large scale statistical surveys, especially of education/labour market links. Comparative studies are generally underdeveloped. In fact, British

youth research is a well developed field, both theoretically and empirically, but it has not succeeded in inserting itself firmly into the academic or policymaking mainstream. Youth research findings are inclined to surface in the form of providing information on 'problem groups', such as ethnic minority youth. In fact, British theory and research on ethnic and race relations is arguably the most advanced in the Community - but government commissioned research largely restricts itself here (as for other topics) to the need to resolve urgent policy problems. In this context, non-governmental organisations play an important role in promoting and funding research of wider and longer term scope. In the case of ethnic/race relations research, for example, local government funding has also been an important source of support in recent years. Policymakers in the relevant Ministries are, however, aware of the disadvantages of short-term and immediately utilitarian research funding strategies, and are actively considering how to overcome these.

Social research in **The Netherlands** is also strongly oriented towards the practical usefulness of its findings, but the relationships between reseachers and policymakers are more structured and more positive than seems to be the case in the UK, at least in the field of youth research:

> "There now exists a policy and research network in which policymakers, researchers and practitioners collaborate. The Ministry's Youth Section in the Ministry has set up a committee for youth research. Social research in The Netherlands must be 'socially useful', and it often ends up in policy applications. But the researchers *do* take part in the formulation of policy priorities in the first place." (Den Haag meetings, 17.5.91)

Social research as a whole in **Portugal** suffers from lack of funding. More resources would certainly prompt the opening of new research horizons via a 'mutliplier' effect: the very fact of studying problematic questions results in a range of further issues for study. The Portuguese Ministry of Youth is presently keen to stimulate the development of youth research. It has supported the founding of a permanent university-based youth *observatoire*, which is at liberty to define its research themes and directions, i.e. it is understood to be autonomous of the Ministry. **Greece** also suffers from a severe shortage of funding for developing social research, and youth research suffers accordingly. The meetings held in Athens as part of the preparation for this report offered, it seems, the first occasion on which Greek researchers studying young people found out who their colleagues were and the kind of work that was being done.

With few exceptions, it is central, regional and local government and public agencies who *commission* youth research in **Spain**. As institutions representing particular social values, voluntary associations, private organisations and the Church also commission some studies. Whilst research is therefore

generally initiated by government and its agencies, it is largely conducted by consultants and private groups. Those commissioned have, for the most part, been individuals formally attached to universities, but the research study itself will not necessarily have been institutionally affiliated to or located at the university. It seems that the universities, their staff and private research institutes do not view themselves as in competition with each other for commissions and funds. The public funding of youth research (beyond the support of *Injuve*, the National Youth Institute) thus benefits private research groups and consultancies, perhaps rather more than in other countries.

From policy to research

As a public agency, *Injuve* is the principal commissioner of youth research in Spain, specifying the work required by means of contract schedules and their attached funding levels. The researchers are responsible for fulfilling the schedule to the best of their ability. The relationship between *Injuve* and the commissioned researcher is thus analogous to that between the property builder and the commissioned architect. This research funding model underlines the importance of policy/research relations at two levels. At one level, relations are defined through the choice of researcher (as a particular individual or as representative of a particular position), the clauses of the contract schedule, and the funding made available. At a second level, relations are defined in terms of property rights: the State is the owner of the findings, save that the moral rights of authorship must be respected. The Spanish model of youth research funding is the most highly structurally integrated in the Community. It enables a continuity of policy and direction where the role of research is harnessed to social and economic development, to the perceived urgency of or sensitivity for given problems. Such a model produces concentrated findings and weak dispersion of relevant material.

Youth research funding in most Member States is, however, dispersed to a greater or lesser degree. Generally, government funding is mediated through various Ministries, depending on the particular focus of study (family, education, employment, etc.) rather than the fact that it is young people who are the subjects of study. The extent to which funding priorities and decisions are taken directly and solely by ministry department or sections varies. In **The Netherlands**, researchers and practitioners are extensively involved at all stages. In the **FRG**, the German Youth Institute (*DJI*) takes on a similar kind of mediating role to that exercised by *Injuve*, if not as exclusively. However, in the FRG as in the other larger Member States, Research Councils and independent foundations are equally important sources of research funding, commissioned or otherwise. These organisations also increasingly set funding priorities for given periods, as in the case, for example, of the UK Economic and Social Research Council's 16-19 Initiative in the mid-1980s.

It might be argued that these various arrangements result in a certain dissipation of effort and lack of continuity. But certainly they all produce a segmentation or fragmentation of 'youth' as a subject of study in its own right, rather than as a particular aspect of a different theme altogether. It is therefore rather more difficult to introduce and implement a *horizontal* research and policy perspective on youth. It might well be possible to gain general agreement that the transition from childhood to adulthood is a complex phenomenon whose effective study demands an interdisciplinary, holistic approach. But Ministries that are responsible for health, education or employment will not be able to place this kind of deep, transverse perspective on youth at the centre of their concerns.

A scientific and technical research administration can play an important role in the orientation and structuring of a national plan for youth research. The existence of such agencies is, on the whole, a function of the scale of available resources for investment, and is hence linked to the size and strength of a given national economy. The same argument applies to the scope and 'state of health' of a country's universities, which, under favourable conditions, can offer the ideal triangle for the development of a research field: knowledge production, knowledge transmission, and links with practice. Such a framework can facilitate the development of youth studies as a discipline in its own right.

Policy-research relations appear to be moving in the direction of bringing research into a closer alignment with policy. This means lending priority to research that is oriented towards the short and medium term, and which can offer a ready input to the needs of immediate decisionmaking imperatives. Sharply-focussed studies, evaluations of the impact of policy measures, and problem-solving inputs are the kinds of research that are most useful to policymakers. The everyday decisionmaking context is marked above all by the precisely thematic, the urgent, the event of the moment. Youth research is thus primarily placed in the role of *servicing* policy. As youth studies continues to develop its understanding of transitions, it will be of interest to see whether its influence on policy *orientations* will increase. At present, well-developed as it is in France, the FRG and in the UK, youth research does not appear to render to policy action the services that one might in principle expect it to do. In sum: the relations between youth policy and research are fundamentally of an economic nature, on the principle of payment by results.

From research to policy

In the democracies that make up the European Community, much weight attaches to public opinion and to the media. Viewed from the standpoint of economic rationality, social research is not a wealth-

producing activity, and is purely a cost factor. In policy terms, it is useful in so far as it is socially curative, offering 'corrective' strategies and solutions to a range of social problems. However, youth researchers too are in a position to measure the utility of their work for the everyday social politics of youth. In developing their theoretical and methodological tools, they are moving towards consensus on the need to take a holistic perspective and to conduct longitudinal studies (both of cohorts and of individual trajectories). These are the keys to answering questions such as how youth is socially constructed; how young people experience and cope with social change; how young people equip themselves for and orient themselves towards the present-day and the future; or what kinds of antipathies and empathies flow between the generations. These are not strictly utilitarian questions, and they cannot be answered in the short-term. The research community perceives itself as having difficulty in making itself heard here - that its pleas for the need to move beyond everyday utility and for more freedom of action fall on deaf ears. In other words, developing strategies and solutions that are 'really' socially useful and necessary requires a degree of release from immediate practical imperatives. If research is enclosed within the command of 'utility', the researcher cannot produce 'really useful' knowledge. If research is without a commission, however, it can do nothing at all! This is an uncomfortable position to find oneself in to the extent that researchers know they could contribute more to the public good. However, as long as researchers are not able to demonstrate the quality of their potential contribution, they will not be equipped with the resources they require to do so. Despite these obstacles, in some disorder but with pragmatism, youth research in Europe is taking shape - in the opinion, at least, of the researchers themselves.

Research/policy interactions

Politicians and policymakers do state clearly what they want from youth research; many are well-informed, especially those whose expertise lies specifically in the youth policy field. Researchers, for their part, express the view that 'academic freedom' does not preclude concern for the social usefulness of research, nor does it exclude the development of continuous and structured links with policymakers and practitioners. Several Community countries have already developed, or are in the process of developing, more structured channels of communication and dialogue. Improving the efficiency and the quality of organised dialogue between policy, research and practice is a shared concern, in the public interest. Committees or Commissions for youth research are one example, the establishment of national *observatoires* is another, and the practice-based 'works in progress' on targeted action topics such as drug abuse and delinquency are a third example. Seen from the vantage point of the Community, these various but converging strands of development are simply highly dispersed. Documenting, disseminating, linking and supporting such developments is all that is required.

2.2 Policy and research priorities for the coming decade

Against the backcloth of the preceding section, we now move to describing the youth policy and research priorities for the coming decade as these were indicated in the national documents and meetings which contributed to the preparation of this report. Whilst there is diversity in the relative importance attached to particular aspects of youth affairs in the Member States, there is, on the whole, a considerable degree of convergence.

2.2.1 Social policy priorities and youth

The persistence of social and economic problems

Despite all the efforts of recent decades to reduce social inequalities and exposure to social risks, little real progress seems to have been made: the problems seem as vast as ever. It is therefore not surprising to find that social and economic inequalities continue to occupy a central position on the youth policy priority stage. We are reminded that youth is, by definition, *transitory:* a time of life remedied by the passage of time, but equally a self-*de*generating resource. Youth is a process of metamorphosis that society devotes itself to accompanying, to protecting.

The Portuguese canvas of youth policy priorities for the 1990s suffices as a general guide to the priorities of Member States as a whole. They include:

*expanding young people's employment opportunities by means of improving the co-ordination of education and training, encouraging local-level employment and self-employment initiatives, and supporting young people's own initiatives in these respects (especially encouraging young entrepreneurs and offering them the administrative services and assistance they need);
*improving the quality of vocational information, guidance and training; reducing educational underachievement and failure;
*developing young people's participation in associative life;
*expanding and improving the provision of free time activities, emphasising programmes that foster social integration, creativity and innovation; cultural life;
*developing programmes to increase young people's awareness of science and technology; supporting young inventors and scientists;
*improved housing opportunities for young people;
*young people and the justice system; the military service and conscientious objection; industry,

agriculture and environment; mobility.

In the view of **Portugal**'s National Youth Council, the major problem in the coming decade remains the precarity of the youth labour market and young people's poor working conditions (e.g. casual jobs carrying no social insurance), together with high rates of school drop-out. Housing, health, social protection, vocational training and the particular difficulties faced by young people living in isolated rural areas are also seen as especially urgent issues. In **Greece**, too, the improvement of vocational guidance and counselling is seen as a priority, especially since many young people are held to have quite 'unrealistic' aspirations. (This is connected to the extreme popularity of public sector employment, which offers a highly-prized security in a a very precarious labour market, but which cannot absorb all those wishing to enter it.) Similarly, high rates of early school drop-out are a matter for considerable concern, together with the consequences of modernisation and urbanisation on young people's values and lifestyles. Changing sexual mores, low rates of contraceptive usage and high rates of teenage abortion constitute a further problematic area for social policy. In general, inequality between the sexes in education, employment and family life is a rising topic of policy interest. In relation to '1992', there is considerable policy interest in its effects upon young people's identities as Greeks and as Europeans, and particular concern to improve the modern foreign language competence of young Greeks. **Ireland** similarly points to the need to equip its young people with Community languages proficiency as well as encouraging the kinds of personal and social skills demanded by the 'new Europe'. The absolutely overwhelming youth policy issue in Ireland remains that of youth unemployment and its personal and social consequences, to which end the Youthreach programme continues to expand, offering an education-led two-year period of vocational training and work experience to all schoolleavers. Disadvantaged youth (those leaving school with no or few qualifications) will continue to take policy priority, but in addition, the main thrust of social policy is to expand and extend educational participation rates for as many young people as possible. For those young people at risk, who have been pushed to the margins, into poverty, homelessness and delinquency, there is a need for greater provision of counselling and crisis centres, drug abuse rehabilitation programmes, and similar services.

The particularly difficult situation of young people in the 'peripheral' Member States comes out very clearly in these accounts. **Spanish** policy concerns for the future equally underline the very scale of youth unemployment and its social 'fallout.' Unemployment, which extends across all economic sectors, is seen to be at the root of the majority of problems confronting young Spaniards. In 1986, almost half of the unemployed and fully six out of ten unemployed women were aged under 25; the economic activity rate of 16-24 year olds was one-fifth below the national average (national survey

figures; Madrid meetings, 29.5.91) . Currently, about a million young people are seeking a first job. Amongst the worrying social consequences of youth unemployment are seen to be: feelings of isolation, marginalisation and despair; the impossibility of gaining independence and the accentuation of intergenerational conflicts; young people's alienation from a society that is unable to offer solutions to marginality, delinquency and drug abuse; a growing bankruptcy of the traditional routes to adulthood and, hence, for social reproduction in general.

The demographic, economic and social characteristics of the larger and/or 'central' Member States differ from those on the 'peripheries', which inevitably means that young people's situations are, in some measure, differently structured. For example, the scale of youth unemployment may be diminishing in these countries, but it has by no means disappeared. Rather, youth unemployment is increasingly concentrated into particular regions, localities, and specific social groups (such as ethnic minority youth, the educationally poorly qualified, etc.; see Part 1, section 1.3.3). Whilst equality of opportunity legislation and policy has assisted in the removal of overt discrimination against girls and women in education, training and employment, the more subtle social forms of gendered inequality remain largely untouched. Sexual behaviour, marriage and family-building patterns have entered a renewed period of flux. A fast-moving, high technology environment is changing the social and communication contexts in which young people grow up, interact and spend their time.

The issues for youth policy in the coming years are therefore slightly differently accented in such Member States, even if the basic themes are similar across the Community as a whole. The Netherlands, for example, has the highest rate of *non*-employment in the Community (approximately 10%). Over the course of the 1980s, political, research and public opinion responses to the problem of youth unemployment have become more polarised. As elsewhere in the Community, the main aim of policy measures has been to equip young people with more educational qualifications, vocational training, social skills and appropriate guidance/support so that they themselves 'solve' the youth unemployment problem. In return, programmes and schemes offering young people the chance to acquire these resources and, at least in theory, a route into the labour market have been developed on an ever increasing scale, culminating in the recently introduced *Youth Work Guarantee Scheme*. Now, in the 1990s, the discussion has taken a new turn. On the one hand, Dutch society and polity traditionally place a high value upon the right to personal autonomy. Hence, young people should have the right to choose for themselves what kind of a life they want to lead. On the other hand, to what extent should the social collectivity be expected to bear the social and economic costs of their choices? The tolerance afforded to young people who run into difficulties during the transition towards adulthood is declining, notably for those who seem to have chosen 'not to work' in the sense this term is conventionally understood.

Such debates, which indisputably have implications for youth policy, raise once more the question of the limits of social policy, in so far as its principles and provisions begin to plumb the depths of the 'philosophical' bases of social solidarity.

For the decade to come, social and youth policy will certainly need to sharpen its focus on inequality of opportunities, both by sex and by ethnicity/race. The so-termed 'modernisation of the typical gender-specific biography', which began with girls' and women's increasing participation in education and employment, is now prompting significant family and lifestyle changes. Similarly, many - if not all - Member States have long since become de facto multicultural societies, or will become so in the foreseeable future. Ensuring equal opportunities for all young people and educating young people for life in multicultural society are both important social policy issues in the coming years. Again, The Netherlands offers an interesting example for study in the European context. In a small, densely populated country with a range of ethnic minority groups, who are concentrated in the large conurbations and who constitute a significant proportion of the population, Dutch society has nevertheless managed to hold intergroup conflict at a significantly lower level than in other parts of the Community. Both cultural values and policy measures contribute.

Perspectives on Europe

On the other hand, a questionmark hangs over the issue of whether '1992' 'speaks' to young Dutch people - whether they are 'ready' for 'Europeanisation.' The young Dutch are certainly well travelled, in the sense of going abroad on holiday or to take seasonal or temporary jobs. On the other hand, researchers report that the majority of young Dutch people do not want to be mobile in the sense of moving away from their home region or locality to live and work on a more long term basis; in other words, they are not predisposed to see mobility as a way of life. This is a view that, with particular exceptions, found repeated echoes in our discussions across the Community. It was well expressed in the amused remark of a British researcher about prospects for youth mobility in the 1990s: „They all want to come here, but ours don't want to go anywhere else. They like it here too much!"

Nevertheless, the prospective policy issue of young people's social participation and citizenship in a 'new Europe', the question of a 'European social apprenticeship,' did often surface indirectly into the discussions. For example, active citizenship in all spheres of life is the most important capacity young Danes should acquire. This implies, amongst other things, that they learn to adapt to social change (technology, communication, ...) and to participate actively in social life - including at an international level. In this sense, the idea of European citzenship or apprenticeship does not necessarily present

Denmark with 'new' orientations and approaches to life. Consequently, Denmark looks towards '1992' with equanimity. If the 'new Europe' is understood to rest on the concepts of region and of regional identity, then neither Danish culture nor Danish identity will be 'threatened', in a society which is already significantly mobile (especially within Scandinavia). Traditionally, most Danes who leave to live and work elsewhere do ultimately return sooner or later. It is the more highly educated and qualified who are mobile, and when they return, they are even more so! In Denmark, the problem of mobility is viewed from the other end: those who come to Denmark from elsewhere are typically less well educated and qualified. Social and economic disadvantage together with weak integration into mainstream Danish society are increasingly evident for minority groups, and this problem has intensified with the economic recession.

The Danish list of youth policy topics related to '1992' serves as a guide to those issues seen as important across the Community. Firstly, there is the question of young people's wage tarifs. Increased rates of labour market mobility could depress the level of young people's wages in those Member States where tarifs are relatively high. (In Denmark, for example, once young workers have reached the age of 18, they are paid at the full adult wage rate.) Secondly, stratification by levels of educational qualification is increasing and becoming more complex in nature. Competition and selection/elimination processes are intensifying, in turn modifying young people's orientations to education itself. Thirdly, given the importance for young people's lives and prospects of building a social Europe, more attention must be directed to the co-ordination and harmonisation of Member States' educational systems. This should proceed on the basis of a better understanding of young people themselves, of their sense of identity and their preferred ways of life. Fourthly, access to mobility is also socially differentiated, within and across Community countries, by socio-economic status, sex, ethnicity, and region. Measures to introduce greater equality of opportunities for mobility are necessary; but equally, to appreciate the differences between mobility and stability as ways of life each in their own right.

Put dramatically, 1992 as a 'day of reckoning' is rapidly approaching. Some Member States now draw very significantly on Community resources for the funding of youth and social policy measures. Their relatively greater reliance on Community funds leads to a greater preoccupation with the likely effects of '1992'. They are, in general, more optimistic and positive about the future, though they may well think that their young people are not, as yet, well prepared for it. 'Peripheral' Member States such as Greece, Ireland, and Portugal are particularly concerned with such issues as the harmonisation and mutual recognition of educational and vocational qualifications; youth mobility and involuntary migration; and the influx of migrants from Eastern Europe as potential competitors in the Community labour market. There is the impression that, whilst mobility is an important policy issue for the

Community, there is little appreciation of its possible consequences for the 'peripheral' Member States. In Portugal, concern is voiced that young people lack knowledge about the Community, and that their principal source of information about it is the television, given that they are little travelled and that they receive little educational input on the subject. Young people almost everywhere in the Community lack knowledge and information about it (see Part 1, section 1.2), but the extent to which this is viewed as a potential disadvantage varies between Member States.

There is some indication that young people's own views on the major problems of the coming years differ from those of their elders. The Young Europeans 1987 and 1990 surveys show that if European youth is united on anything, it is on their assessment that the environment is the most urgent problem we face. Both Eurobarometer data and our discussions with policymakers, researchers and practitioners suggest that adults place most emphasis upon labour market and demographic trends. The Young Europeans surveys also record a rising interest in Community matters and 'Europeanisation' over the course of the decade, but although '1992' is frequently cited as of some significance for young people's future lives, young people themselves remain rather disconnected from the debate over whether it is necessary or desirable to develop European-level youth policy. Some Member States are less positively disposed towards this idea in principle; others are already attached to the Community 'motor', if in diverse ways.

> "Associations' programmes are very dependent on the orientations of the Community, but there is also a discontinuity between what the Community sees as urgent problems and what we in Ireland see to be the problems. The Community could help young people by placing employment where the people have most need of it. Faced with the scale of this problem, the associations can do little. Rates of participation in activities are dropping, resources are becoming sparser. The associations are mediating all sorts of action programmes to improve qualification and training levels, but they all serve the same categories of young people, and probably not those who are in most need. First of all, it is necessary to have a global policy for all young people aged 15-24. On the basis of this framework, one could then establish priorities. Without a national youth policy, a Community policy can have no effect. We expect from the Community large scale initiatives on large scale problems, including the integration of centre/periphery differences in the Community." (Dublin meetings, 25.3.91)

In the eyes of those who support the development of Community-wide youth policy, the initial obstacles to be overcome are, firstly, the different political and policymaking administrative arrangements for youth affairs in the twelve Member States, and, secondly, co-ordinating the internal arrangements of the Commission itself in these respects. Creating a *horizontal youth policy* is that which

is at stake. Without a political will to do so - which does not, at the moment, notably exist - little progress can be made. In any event, it is „concrete action rather than fine words" that is required, as one youth practitioner forcefully put it. The Youth Card is one example of a practical step forward; more positive steps of this kind would help to pave the way for a more integrated approach to youth affairs in the European Community.

2.2.2 Research priorities for the 1990s

Youth researchers list the following topics as of theoretical and empirical concern for the coming years:

*processes of social differentiation between differently situated groups of young people;
*youth culture, ways of life, social networks and cliques;
*urban and rural youth comparisons and relations;
*changes in the construction of gendered identity and their contributory social factors (e.g. sexuality and fertility control, education and employment participation in relation to young women's self-images, plans and social practices);
*further and higher education students as a distinct social group amongst young people;
*the evolution of new ideas, values, political perspectives amongst young Europeans; youth and cultural representation;
*migration, mobility and the (potential) emergence of (new) regional, national and European identities;
*deviant milieux and ways of life;
*young people's lifestyles and strategies as influenced by accommodation markets and related social legislation;
*changing roles and relations in couples, marriage and families; processes of early family formation;
*the development of integrated analyses of youth transitions, in particular through drawing more attention to private life, family life, leisure, housing, etc. to balance the focus on school-to-work transitions.

<u>Youth as a 'social problem'</u>

The preceding list of topics looks at youth 'for and in itself'; this second list focuses upon youth as a social group whose situations, experiences and patterns of behaviour pose questions and problems in a broader context:

*sexual inequality in education, training and employment

*young people's modes of adaptation to high unemployment levels

*occupational images amongst young people

*the young disadvantaged, who may be seen as having difficulties in the transition to adulthood, but who do not view themselves in this way;

*processes of social polarisation and exclusion of young people possessing/displaying given social and personal attributes and practices;

*youth mobility and migration: its geography, framing conditions, motives, extent and rhythm, and accompanying decisionmaking processes; migrant return;

*young people, citizenship and autonomy;

*young people's mental and physical well-being; post-AIDS patterns of sexual behaviour.

Young people's needs

These topics seek information and guidance in order to develop and provide appropriate facilities and services for young people:

*the interconnections between education/housing/employment in facilitating or throwing up obstacles to young people in the transition to adulthood;

*welfare and benefit arrangements for young people across the Community;

*guidance and counselling mediums and strategies for young people living in rapidly changing societies where the force of traditional social norms and values is disintegrating;

*defining the training needs of drop-outs and early schoolleavers;

*specific needs of migrant and minority youth: qualifications, access to employment, housing, social and cultural integration.

Evaluation studies

In the public interest, policymakers, practitioners and researchers all agree on the need for more and better evaluation of action programmes at national and at Community level. Evaluation, in this case, goes beyond the formal controls of auditing and accountability that accompany the investment of public funds. Assessing the effects of intervention programmes in order to plan for the future demands a formative, process-oriented and holistic approach to evaluation. Longer-term perspectives are also necessary. For example, evaluations of the impact of youth education and training programmes would do well to expand their scope in looking at the economic, social and cultural effects and implications

of rising levels of qualification upon successive cohorts.

2.3 Evaluation

Member States' policy positions towards youth differ - in the first instance, according to whether or not they have an explicit 'national youth policy.' But regardless of this, in practice, all Member States undertake a series of measures directed at youth (see 2.1.1 and 2.2.1 above). In broad terms, what we might term 'social policies for youth' exist in all Community countries. In addition, all the Member States have an 'organisation of youth organisations', typically the National Youth Councils. Their role and status vis à vis the state and public authorities varies between countries, from those which are quasi-governmental in character to those which act as an interest group lobbying organisation.

Young people themselves, on whose behalf such policies, measures, representation and lobbying are undertaken, do not, by and large, judge their situation as particularly unfavourable. Overall, 82% of Young Europeans 1987 respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the life they lead, and this percentage rose to 88% in the 1990 survey. Interestingly, the range of 'satisfied' responses by country narrowed considerably between 1987 and 1990, from 31% to 19%. In other words, young people's level of satisfaction with their lives increased markedly in those countries where they had been least satisfied three years previously (for example, in Italy). We can but surmise what lies behind this trend. Neither do we know what this optimism comprises, nor what contributes to it - including whether national policy measures or Community action programmes have played any part.

In contrast with this self-reported picture of optimism, the social problems to which we have drawn attention are real enough. In some cases, for some groups of young people, these problems are of a serious nature, in need of urgent social and policy response. Inequalities of opportunity, poverty and need, marginality and exclusion: these are the social problems that press themselves upon our attention, that accompany many young people's transition to adulthood. Observable social problems such as these might be described as the broad terrain, the backcloth, against which the features of youth policy and research are analysed.

2.3.1 Member States' perspectives - parallels and divergences

Principles, strategies and objectives

From the national reports and discussions, four political orientations, or axes, within perspectives on youth affairs can be distinguished. These four orientations are not mutually exclusive, but co-exist in varying combinations in each Member State. Their features can be described at three levels: principles, strategies and objectives (as shown immediately below).

PRINCIPLES	STRATEGIES	OBJECTIVES
social progressivism	progressive-participative	mutual preparation for an equal, open, changing society
solidarity and social justice	redistributive-corrective	countering persistent social inequalities
active citizenship	reform-modernisation	facilitating social and economic evolution
social integration	integration-insertion	optimising transition mechanisms and processes

At the level of general principles, the first axis is that of *social progressivism*, inspired by a spirit of partnership. Young people, their organisations and their representatives are understood as co-actors within an integrated youth policy, which can be seen as closest to the idea of a *horizontal* youth politics. Youth is indeed the future of society, but 'merely' to prepare young people for their future adult roles does not suffice. It is equally as important to acknowledge and to make positive use of the way young people *qua* young people see the world, not to wait until they become adults first before 'taking any notice' of them. Taking young people seriously is, in itself, a means for fostering active citizenry: young people are thus encouraged and enabled to take an active part in social affairs in general, not only in relation to questions that directly concern their lives at the moment. This perspective is reflected in such phrases as „it is necessary to create the conditions for young people's access to social responsibility" (The Netherlands), or „it is necessary to create social spaces for the protection and active participation of young people" (Portugal).

The second axis is that of *solidarity and social justice*. Here, the emphasis lies in the betterment of young people's conditions of life (France), ensuring equality of opportunity (Belgium), and giving priority to the young disadvantaged (Ireland) (howsoever this group may be nationally defined). *Active citizenship*

itself is the third axis of political principle. Here, youth policies may specifically aim to promote „an active citizenry, responsible and critical" (Belgium, Portugal, France), „an active, rounded citizenry oriented towards a new European future" (Denmark), and explicitly consider young people „as citizens in their own right" (The Netherlands, Denmark).

Finally, the fourth axis is that of *social integration*, which aims to facilitate a moderated evolution of social life by placing the 'march of generations' within a framework of continuity. This political principle appeals to the transmission of values, social and economic 'absorption' (the FRG), and respect for the sanctity of private life (The Netherlands). From this perspective, social and cultural youth policy is the best way to suppress the incidence of social problems and risks (Denmark). Young people are nevertheless the dynamic of modernisation. As such, they must be encouraged to develop open and flexible perspectives on life, so that they are capable of positively responding to changing circumstances, but within a respect for social and cultural tradition (Spain).

Four sets of policy strategies and objectives correspond to these four axes of political principle. Firstly, we can identify *progressive-participative* strategies, which are positively open towards a 'European future' with all its changes and uncertainties. Such strategies include the promotion of lifelong education in order to develop a competence for active social responsibility (Belgium), perhaps extending as far as envisaging a common European education system (Denmark). They also include support for the development of a Community youth policy, and they include systematic, participative, democratic evaluation of all policy and action undertaken with young people and on their behalf. In a word, these strategies fall into the domain of pedagogic action strategies. They correspond with specific policy objectives whose goal is mutual preparation for an equal, open and changing society. Examples of such objectives include encouraging voluntary youth mobility and the development of linguistic competences (Denmark, Luxembourg); furthering equality of opportunity between the sexes (The Netherlands); promoting positive adaptation to multicultural society (the UK); and fostering entrepreneurial and innovative attitudes, an openness to science and new technology (Portugal).

The logic of *redistributive-corrective* strategies is that of optimising individual or group life chances, so that young people are placed in the most favourable position possible to negotiate successfully their transition to adulthood. Policy objectives linked with these strategies can be of two kinds: countering negative factors and optimising positive factors. In the former category, we find measures to protect young people from social risks and maladjustments, but also programmes targeted at disadvantaged groups (such as isolated rural youth [Portugal] or unqualified schoolleavers [Ireland]). The latter category includes compensatory and intervention education programmes (the UK), measures to raise

education and training participation rates (Spain), job creation/guarantee schemes (The Netherlands), alternative youth housing projects (for example, *foyers* in France, group renovation projects in the FRG). The most sophisticated (and infrequently found) policy strategies on this axis of orientation are those which attempt to address the integrated and cumulative effects of social inequalities, which over time polarise young people towards exclusion.

Reform-modernisation strategies, on the other hand, characteristically take the form of organisational innovations that, at the level of objectives, aim to facilitate processes of social and economic evolution. Currently, this implies the decentralisation of the State and its agencies, which, amongst other things, brings young people into closer proximity with the services and activities provided for them. These strategies thus include the development of new-style youth information services, youth *observatoires*, and the local administration/execution of youth policy and youth action programmes. Examples here are the Spanish Integrated Youth Plans, the French Local Youth Action Plans and, equally, all concerted grassroots initiatives. Specific policy objectives will apply themselves to those aspects of young people's local, specific and contemporary situations seen as requiring attention in given social, cultural and geographical contexts.

Social, political and cultural *integration-insertion* is the fourth category of strategies. They include the development of young people's participation in associations; the co-ordination of education, training and guidance; encouraging the 'productive' use of free time and leisure; and promoting the voluntary involvement of 'civil society' in youth work. These strategies are all oriented towards integrating young people into society through a socialising framework of participation. Specific policy objectives might include the training of *animateurs* and youth workers (France, the FRG); the improvement and optimisation of youth research as a policy input tool (Belgium); the harmonisation and exportability of educational and vocational qualifications (Ireland, Greece).

<u>The potential for a Community plan of action for youth</u>

In view of the fact that there are Member States who do not support the development of explicit youth policies at national and at Community levels, it follows that we cannot conclude there to be an overall political will to pursue a Community youth policy plan as such. At the same time, all Member States have pursued measures that can be regrouped under the broad term of 'social policies for youth', so that a degree of practical convergence in specific policy domains does exist. The four axes of political principle - as reflected in the development of actual policy practices - do show some patterns of convergence. All Member States acknowledge the necessity of pursuing *equality of opportunity*, of ensuring

young people's *social and vocational integration*, and of providing for *social prevention*.

The practical 'strategic plans' that all Member States pursue are very much linked with their particular social 'philosophies' and internal realities, which once again return us to the terrain of intercultural comparison: where are young people seen as children 'writ large'? Where are young people considered as adults 'writ small'? How far do parents' own perspectives on their offspring (rather than those of young people themselves about themselves) direct the shape of social policies for youth? Which societies, if any, see themselves as having a 'moral debt' towards their young people? We still have no satisfactory answers to such questions, which return us once more to the research domain. On the other hand, strategies for countering social inequalities can be identified across the Community. They find a similar policy expression in all countries, but these strategies are superimposed upon very dissimilar and unequal social realities *between* the Member States. The Community's role is perhaps that of offering a communication and exchange context in which common interests may first come to appreciate their differences - in order that they may then move towards a more genuine convergence. So, for example, whereas all Member States aim to ensure young people's social integration (and have developed policy measures accordingly), the basis for that integration is, itself, cultural difference (as in the case of founding citizenship explicitly upon national identity).

The experience of Community youth programmes to date shows that Member States most readily find convergence of interest at the level of discrete action objectives. Intersections between Member States' policy profiles and their research potential (considered further below) release directions for Community facilitation and involvement in youth affairs, which can be expressed in practical proposals (described in Part 3 of this report). To complete the framework within which social policies for youth in Community countries can be described and understood, we need briefly to consider the administrative mediation of youth policy and action programmes.

Government agencies charged with the administration of youth affairs are placed in a position of *interface* between young people and the State. They address themselves to youth through the services and activities that they organise, that they initiate and finance. The greater the extent to which state agencies take on an active interfacing role, the lesser the scope that remains for the involvement of voluntary organisations. Government agencies themselves become the official representatives of youth: their very presence acknowledges, in some sense, that youth exists as a socially recognised group, whose rights and obligations are to be respected - in so far as it is judged to be in the public interest to do so. The public interest naturally includes such matters as assuring the future of democracy, the maintenance of social peace and social, economic and cultural development. At the

same time, youth affairs administrations represent State interests to young people; they mediate social and economic policies relevant to youth (such as employment, housing, leisure, ...) in the character and direction of their services, programmes and activities.

Youth affairs administrations are also themselves *transitional* in character. They have a permanent role in the sense that youth, as a social group within the population, never disappears. Some features of young people's situations are, similarly, constant, even if the social contexts in which generations grow up do change over time. The young unemployed are always with us, although their numbers and composition may change. Young people remain vulnerable to social risks, although the kinds of risks to which they are exposed do not remain constant, as in the case of drug abuse. But they are not the *same* young people; ways of life evolve, needs change. For example, young people's general disaffection with the kinds of activities provided for them by youth organisations is evident. The organisations have responded with amending their programmes, but it remains the case that the content and the context of what they offer no longer fits well with how young people like to spend their leisure time. Those who administrate youth affairs, whether government or voluntary organisations, need to be able to respond rapidly and flexibly to young people's changing perspectives and needs; in this sense, they are transitional.

Youth questions inevitably cut across the competences of other policymaking authorities, agencies and providers of services in such fields as education, employment and vocational training, health, justice, housing, etc. Youth affairs administrations are inclined to be *subsidiary* to 'vertical' policy domains such as these; their role is typically one of encouraging other administrations to take youth into consideration. Nevertheless, youth affairs administrations do have their own missions. They take a leading role in formulating policies for free time and leisure activities, for creating 'social space' for youth, for the prevention of social risk, and, in general, for the services that support young people in the process of becoming citizens and adults.

2.3.2 The potential for youth research in the Community - disparities and convergences

What are the experiences and realities of youth research in the European Community? In so far as it is possible to do so concisely and non-reductively, this section describes and synthesises youth research as a distinct field in the Member States. Together with the shapes taken by policy, these patterns suggest how the 'powerlines' of policy-research interaction might develop.

Youth research in Community countries

As noted earlier (in section 2.1.3.), the directions taken by youth research tend to mirror past and present national policy priorities. Youth research is very much an applied intellectual field; in some countries, what might be termed a 'pure research' tradition exists alongside the applied field. In other words, youth research as a whole is a distinct academic specialism with a solid theoretical base as well as a body of empirical and practice-related knowledge, but these elements are spread unevenly between Member States. Well-established pure and applied traditions exist in the FRG, France, the UK and, arguably, Italy, i.e. in the four largest Community countries.

Germany and France both have an *old-established tradition* of youth research. Additionally, although not generally well-illuminated in analyses of the development of the field, both the German and the (relatively more recent) Spanish youth research traditions are implicated in these countries' political histories. It cannot be denied that, in general, one important but reluctantly acknowledged reason for the public and state interest shown in young people arises from their role as a vanguard of social change. This may well be seen as desirable, as necessary to social rejuvenation and survival. The reverse side of the coin is that young people are equally the source of threats to the social order, the object of intermittent and recurring 'moral panics.' This is one of the elements that contributes to a concern for young people's social integration, which is one of the axes of principle informing youth policies (see earlier, p.97). Under totalitarian régimes, such elements become dominant, so that youth research may become an instrument of surveillance and control of a potentially disruptive sector of the population, just as youth organisations become instruments of collective socialisation into appropriate values and behaviours. Interestingly, it was precisely the concern that young Germans had been only too well socialised into totalitarian values that led to large-scale American funding of youth research in West Germany after 1945, which gave a renewed impetus to the postwar development of the field. In its contemporary form, youth research in Europe emerged in the 1950s, initially very much influenced from the United States. By the 1970s, the European field had established its autonomy, but in many Community countries modern youth research did not truly develop until the 1980s.

Today, a genuine *'intellectual domain'* of youth research exists in Denmark, the UK and, most recently, in Portugal. In Germany, France and, within the last decade, in The Netherlands, youth research is *additionally* recognised as a professional specialism and as a (sub)discipline in its own right. This means that German, French and Dutch youth researchers enjoy a professional working and communication infrastructure which is not well developed elsewhere in the Community. They can adopt the label of 'youth researcher' and be recognised in academic and policymaking circles as specialists. This is not

markedly the case either in the UK or in Portugal, where a focus on youth is more simply one amongst many possible topics within the broader domain of sociological, psychological, or educational research. Within Denmark, youth research has not succeeded in establishing itself as an institutionalised academic specialism. Through the *Scandinavian* framework of the Nordic Youth Research Information network, however, Danish youth researchers find an identity and a professional community. This places Denmark slightly to one side of the research communities of NW continental Europe, in that its professional reference literature is more strongly Anglo-American than Franco-German. Denmark's situation is reminiscent of that in Ireland, but because of its close links with the autonomous Scandinavian research community, Danish youth research is not characterised by the same degree of isolation and dependence as is Irish youth research.

Youth research is *formally organised* only in Germany, The Netherlands and in Spain. These countries possess institutes, departments or sections which specialise in youth research and/or university chairs in youth studies. France (in founding an *observatoire*) and Portugal (in establishing an Institute/ *observatoire*) are in the process of developing more formalised organisation of this kind. France is, then, approaching the same developmental niveau as in Germany, in that it already has a long tradition of youth research and an established professional infrastructure has existed for some time (for example, the *Jeunesses et Société* collective). In The Netherlands, a favourable conjunction of circumstance gave youth studies the opportunity to gain an institutional basis in the mid-1980s, when youth unemployment was one of the major preoccupations of policy action *and* when universities underwent a degree of internal reorganisation. However, a good organisational youth research infrastructure does not automatically lead to innovative strength. In Spain, where interdisciplinary qualitative research on youth issues (which has been the main source of theoretical innovation in the last two decades) has developed, it has tended to exist independently, alongside the more quantitative and statistically oriented work directed from *Injuve*.

Where youth research is most well established as a specialism in its own right (in Germany and in France), the field throws up significant *internal differentiations*: different sub-specialisms and competing schools of thought can be identified. So, for example, in the FRG, we can speak of the 'Bielefeld school' or of 'historical youth research' or of the 'destandardisation thesis'. In contrast, whilst British youth research also has a good theoretical base, this has not emerged directly from a community of youth researchers but rather from the broader sociological and cultural studies terrains. So, for example, theories of social reproduction have been applied to young people's situation, but they have not been explicitly reworked within youth reseach itself. The 'CCCS school', famous for its work on youth cultures and subcultures in the late 1970s, is often equated with British youth research, but its work in

this field was but one product of a much broader set of concerns. Youth researchers in the UK are still inclined to view themselves as a group without a 'brand name.'

As far as research methods are concerned, in Denmark, the UK, The Netherlands, France and, increasingly, in Germany, the *dominance* of quantitative approaches has disappeared or is waning. Denmark and the UK have probably the strongest ethnographic youth research traditions, which is interesting in view of the relative marginalisation of youth research as a specialist field in both countries. It may be that these two features are linked with each other, in that contemporary ethnographic youth researchers typically employ radical social theory and focus their attention on inequality, exclusion and the reproduction of power relations. This renders them rather uncomfortable, and perhaps less immediately useful, for policymaking purposes.

The youth research communities in Belgium, Greece, The Netherlands, Portugal and the UK seem to be those most sensitive to the need to link their research to *practice*, i.e. to the concerns of youth and social workers, education and training practitioners, and young people themselves. This reflects a growing concern to link the worlds of research and social action more closely, but also to promote more democratic research practices. In Portugal, for example, research is understood as a stimulant and a tool for progressive social change. In Greece, many consider that research has a responsibility to assist in the resolution of urgent social problems (for example, high rates of school dropout). A sensitivity towards practice does not necessarily mean that relations between policymakers, researchers and practitioners are well developed. This would seem to be the case for The Netherlands and in Portugal. In Ireland, however, the three groups may communicate and co-operate together well, but youth research itself is not a well developed field. Those involved in action projects on behalf of young people - generally financed by the European Community - remark with regret that there is much less research-based monitoring and evaluation of their programmes than they would like.

Co-operation between Spanish policymakers, practitioners and researchers takes place within the framework of the mission of *Injuve*, the national youth institute. In the FRG and in France, intergroup co-operation and explicit links between research and practice *appear* relatively less prominent, because they exist within specialised, complex and internally differentiated terrains. These terrains offer sub-specialisms which are specifically oriented towards practical, action-based concerns. The *Deutsches Jugendinstitut* (German Youth Institute), for example, has always played an important role in linking research and practice; its own research has traditionally been oriented to the immediate needs of youth work and policy, despite the gradual expansion of its role over the years. A rough 'division of labour' exists between the *DJI* and university-based youth research, which focuses upon theoretical and long-

term issues. Here, the scale of, and the resources available to, youth research can support a community of researchers more directly centred on pure research and theorising. At the same time, youth work is a professional occupation accompanied by formal training courses and qualifications. In the majority of countries, however, youth research is obliged to respond more exclusively to policy priorities and to practical needs.

All over the Community, however, youth research suffers from two fundamental weaknesses: firstly, the separation between theoretical analysis and empirical work; and, secondly, a division of the intellectual domain into two binary fields - the ideological/cultural and the social/economic. The former typically looks at subcultures, ways of life, values, attitudes, and leisure/participation patterns, the latter at school-work transitions, social inequalities/polarisation, and patterns of familial reproduction. Each is inclined to view the other as holding a dominant position in the field, and neither communicates well with the other. One of the tasks of European youth research is to confront these oppositions productively.

Foci of recent research

What is the general tableau of existing knowledge, interests, and orientations of youth research in Community countries?

*Social, political, and associative *participation* has been particularly well studied in the FRG. Ireland, Italy and Portugal are also particularly interested in this topic.

*The focus of British youth research lies in the different forms of social inequality that structure young people's *conditions of life*. Rural/urban differences are of particular interest in the FRG, Greece and Spain; interest in regional differences is strong in Italy and the UK.

*Studying the *social regulation of transitions* from the point of view of education and training is of common interest across the Community. French youth researchers interpret this theme more broadly, to include citizenship and socialisation.

**Education, training and the labour market* has been the dominant theme everywhere in the 1980s. For Ireland it remains the central theme, the anchor concept for defining social disadvantage.

*Interest in *theoretical work* is rarely overtly cited, but it is of underlying importance in the FRG, France and the UK, additionally in Belgium, Denmark and The Netherlands.

**Youth culture* is a perennially popular theme in the majority of Community countries. It seems to be currently enjoying particular popularity in France, Italy and Portugal.

**Youth and social problems* are equally a common domain of Community interest. Studies of drug abuse

and deviancy appear to have produced a very large number of studies in Belgium and Greece in recent years; France, Portugal and the UK also cite a good deal of work in this area.

•*Youth mobility and migration* comprise a focal research theme above all in Ireland and Portugal, and they expect this interest to continue into the foreseeable future.

The future shape of youth research

Reviewing youth researchers' assessments of the directions in which youth research should move in the coming decade results in a clear message: the disappearance of education/training/labour market as 'the' dominant theme. Young people's *conditions of life* remain a lively field of interest, but with a stronger *accent on regional, sexual and ethnic disparities*. This is linked to two theoretical concerns: firstly, developing models of social polarisation and exclusion processes; secondly, understanding contemporary social change and modernisation processes and their implications for the emergence of postmodern values. Changes in values and conditions of life particularly interest Denmark, Greece, Ireland, and Spain - all the 'peripheral' countries, one might say. Portugal has already begun to study these questions. Citizenship, mobility and migration form a complex assembly of future research themes, of interest in the majority of countries.

As far as perspectives and methods are concerned, youth researchers in Europe are in broad consensus that:

•well-developed *frameworks for analysis* are essential to good quality youth research, but this requires a scale of personnel and resources investment beyond the means of many Community countries working alone. Denmark's solution has been to seek synergy within the Scandinavian research community; this enables an amplification of the value of national resources. Extending this model to the Community as a whole does not automatically require a common will to create a Community-wide youth research network, although some countries (such as Ireland) would be likely to favour this. Others favour the development of bilateral or multilateral links (for example, Denmark, France, Portugal and Spain).

•*Quantitative and qualitative methods are complementary*. They need to be brought into closer relationship with each other at the level of individual research design. All too frequently, when one knows *how many* young people are in this situation or are relevant to that measure, etc., one does not know *who* they are. The situations of minority youth are a good example, where, even if breakdowns were available for the relevant social demographic parameters, the data would tell us relatively little. As one researcher

pointed out, the situation of Moslem girls in Birmingham is undoubtedly quite different from that of Moslem girls in Marseille, and we cannot know how and why until specific, contextual studies are conducted. Nevertheless, studies of routes, trajectories and biographies - the kinds of transversal analyses that youth research is engaged in developing at the present time - suffer from the reverse weakness: one knows who the young people are without knowing how many they are. There is, for example, a rich qualitative literature on processes of exclusion, but we have little sense of their quantitative significance. Overall, however, there is still a tendency to rely too heavily on quantitative research, partly due to the seductive security of numbers. In those Community countries where economic development is understood as the key to the future, social arithmetic holds a strong attraction. Charting social and economic progress in quantitative terms is by no means unimportant, but, as with all forms of description, it too has its limits, as we have noted at several points in this report.

**Longitudinal, global studies of processes are highly desirable* in order to enrich our knowledge of 'who and how many'. Such studies offer access to understanding *how* one is young, how one lives transition, how values are produced, how social reproduction and change operate. The youth phase is ultimately transitory for those living through it at any one time, but it is a constant for the society in which it continuously unfolds anew for individuals, groups and generations. Longitudinal studies can pursue the transitory and the durable more fully. Social policies for youth are typically compensatory and palliative, rarely addressing inequalities and marginalisation at source. Longitudinal studies have much potential for enriching a deeper understanding of the social world; in this respect, the option of delving closer to the roots is open to policymakers, if they choose to pursue it.

**Available national statistics are inadequate for the needs of youth research.* Much work lies ahead, if present economic, demographic and geographic categories are to be transcended in a productive manner. If a useful knowledge of European youth is the aim, then improved co-operation with social statisticians at national and Community level is essential, especially in furnishing a basis for longitudinal observations, which are inherently better suited to the study of social process. If economy organises social space, and sociology contents itself with recording the consequences (Social Europe, 6/88 *Les jeunes face à l'emploi*), fruitful bridging of the gap is an apposite goal.

**Social action programme evaluation cannot adopt a natural sciences model,* but rather sets its own, particular parameters and criteria. Appropriate models already exist; it is rather a matter of securing wider acceptance of holistic, democratic evaluation procedures and styles. Policymaking circles are inclined to interpret evaluation in terms of R&D input-output, objectives-based models. It is clearly important to assess the efficacy of policy measures both in terms of aims vs. outcomes and for

accountability purposes. The question is rather *how* such evaluations can profitably be conducted, and *what counts* as an 'efficient' outcome. Furthermore, indirect or longer-term *secondary* outcomes attract little attention. For example, the immediate objective of training and qualification action programmes for disadvantaged youth is successful labour market insertion. Very generally, the short-term 'success rate' appears to run at about one-third, but long-term success rates are unknown. Such programmes also have other kinds of outcomes: some participants may benefit particularly from the educational and socialising elements of the scheme or course they follow, but nevertheless do not find employment immediately afterwards. For some of those who do not succeed in finding employment in the short-term, the effect of participation may be negative: a further setback, which simply intensifies the cumulative process of labour market exclusion. Such secondary effects are poorly understood. The Community could well play a role in promoting a more complex, progressive and evolutionary approach to policy programme evaluation, and in encouraging an action research perspective on the relationships between theory and practice.

* There is a need for a *forum for co-operation and exchange* between policymakers and researchers. Relinquishing the proverbial ivory tower must be felt to have some positive effect; a communication forum offers orientation, clarifying both what is already known, and what needs to be found out. In this sense, researchers have no doubts about their social usefulness; the conduct of research may require autonomy, but direction and purpose is achieved through links with policymakers and practitioners.

**The involvement of the European Community in the development of youth research is desirable.* Reaching a political consensus on this might hold uncertainties, but the idea should be considered closely. The research community is evidently keen for the Community to prompt, facilitate and assist in all ways possible to promote the development of an identity, the quality and weight of European comparative - perhaps specifically Community - youth research. The proposals in Part 3 of this report take up this point in making concrete suggestions which take account of existing bilateral or multilateral contacts, and which assume realisation on the basis of the auxiliary funding principle.

2.3.3 Modalities of fruitful interaction between youth research and youth policy

Youth policies at national or indeed Community level are not a prerequisite for the existence and continued development of youth research, but explicit youth policies can help to provide favourable conditions for that development. The Community could assist in this respect, by contributing towards

realising the evident potential for a fruitful interaction betwen policy and research.

Policy-research relations in the Community

We might summarise the accounts of youth policy and youth research in the Member States in the following terms. An integrated youth policy does not exist in the UK (and there is no political will to develop such a policy), but, viewed in a European-wide context, British youth research is an important contributor to the field. The Danish government does not have an explicit youth policy (rather a series of social policies for youth), and the 'work' of youth policy is shared between the government and the voluntary organisations. Alongside this dispersed division of political labour, Danish youth research is integrated within a well-organised Scandinavian professional framework. German youth research undoubtedly comprises the most well established and elaborated community and tradition to be found amongst the Member States. Youth policy is firmly anchored within a complex network of government and voluntary agencies; the scope for youth research funding is relatively large; and there is a demand for youth research from the professional youth worker community. However, the strength of German youth research is not solely attributable to these factors. Youth policy and youth research in France developed independently, with no formalised links between the two. French youth research owes its recent development to the support provided by the founding of CNRS; the evolution of youth policy has since 'caught up' and is now planning more formalised links. The development of Spanish youth research has been very much guided by government commissioned study contracts, channelled through *Injuve* and arising from policy-defined priorities. This has not necessarily favoured the growth of a more explicitly theoretically informed, 'pure' research strand. In Portugal, the development of youth policy in the 1980s has engendered, in its wake, the establishment of a national youth research field; current policy developments in Belgium suggest a similar process. The present strength of Dutch youth research arose through a conjunction of favourable social and political circumstance between the late 1970s and mid-1980s, and is maintained by a strong policy interest in applied youth research. In a less obviously integrated but basically similar manner as in Denmark, Dutch youth research has drawn energising power from British and, especially, German 'theoretical slipstreams.' Both Greek and Irish youth research communities, on the other hand, are probably too small in size and resources base for this kind of strategy, just as policy action measures for youth in these countries are highly dependent upon Community priorities and funding. Development of youth research in the smaller, 'peripheral' Member States is therefore viewed in a Community context. Luxembourg, small but affluent, has developed youth policy, but, in common with many other research fields, youth research must find its 'home' in bilateral or Community co-operation.

Thus, a variety of patterns in the relationships between youth policy and research exist in the Member States; Community-wide generalisations cannot be made. The scale of national youth research is a function not only of political will but also of available resources. Nevertheless, everywhere in the Community, both youth policy and youth research have an interest in developing closer, more productive links; policymakers and researchers in some Member States positively favour this. Youth policy can assist youth research, obviously, by commissioning studies, investing financial resources, and providing for communication/exchange networks. It can also support youth research indirectly: its interest validates the field and its 'products', and underscores the social usefulness of research activity. Youth policy is, however, also in a position to put a brake on the vitality of youth research, essentially by according it an exclusively policy servicing role.

Where research is neither isolated nor incorporated, where both policy and research recognise and value each other's roles and contributions, where practitioners are connected into research and policy circles, and where a forum for dialogue is explicitly created and used productively, synergy emerges of its own accord. In much of the Community, some or all of these features already exist or are *en train* (establishment of individual and group networks and exchanges [increasingly funded through ERASMUS], European colloquia, *observatoires*, etc.). The overall climate for development seems favourable, whatever the specific national divergences of approach, interests or schools of thought. Youth research networks (not restricted to the Community countries) are springing into life all across Europe (for example: CYRCE [Centre for Youth Research Co-operation in Europe], based in Berlin; NYRI (Nordic Youth Research Information), co-ordinated from Copenhagen; a Franco-German youth research network initiated by the *Office Franco-allemand pour la Jeunesse/Deutsch-französisches Jugendwerk*; a planned Council of Europe European Youth Centre Databank, based in Strasbourg). These initiatives have a variety of purposes - developing joint projects, information exchange, arranging symposia, publishing research findings, and so on. Their activities bear witness to the vitality of the field and an enthusiasm for looking beyond national borders. Yet, within the majority of those borders, youth research still does not genuinely exist as an established, formally recognised specialism in its own right (just as youth policy has difficulty in establishing itself as an autonomous field within politics). Such recognition demands the existence of a *professional identity, networks of information* upstream (data sources and ongoing projects) and downstream (an existing body of knowledge), a *clientèle, continuity* (full time specialists), *funding* and a *forum* for dialogue with policymakers and practitioners. Only in the larger and most affluent of the Member States is it possible to find, now or potentially, all or most of these features.

The Community might intervene, in diverse ways, to enhance that potential for all Member States. It

might supply the resources to develop the national standing of youth research, and perhaps to create the basis for a distinctively European youth research. It might support continuity by offering European-based commissions; it could certainly act to improve access to European data sources through its documentation services. It could assist those Member States with fewer means to reach a developmental threshold by enhancing individual contributions, as in the 'Scandinavian model.' It could underwrite the value of transversal perspectives on youth affairs. It could, finally, facilitate dialogue between policymakers, practitioners and researchers by creating appropriate channels and fora, which might act as role models for national communication networks.

Conclusion

Youth research needs to be *used*, youth policy *enriched*. We require *both* fresh, up-to-date information about the evolution of young people's values and circumstances, *and* more sophisticated evaluation of policy and practice as a tool of insight and decisionmaking. Both tasks demand dialogue between research and policy - but not the incorporation of research within policy. Policy may validate the social utility of research, but it cannot validate the quality of research as such: this is a matter for the professional community to which youth researchers belong, which underlines once more the need for greater continuity of resources and staffing. Fruitful dialogue further demands *reciprocal respect:* research and policy have differing missions. The autonomy and the responsibility of policymaking are embedded within a complex social fabric, in which the sole imperative is the public good but in which policy choices are not determined solely by the research information available. Research, for its part, is accountable for the perspectives and methods it chooses, but not for the fact that its findings sometimes uncomfortably 'ruffle' existing views and practices. Within the interactive framework assumed here, those concerned with youth affairs must aim to *seek agreement* on the research, policy and practical measures to be pursued and on the distribution of available resources. Under such conditions, youth research might make a significant contribution to youth policymaking processes that are oriented to social change and the construction of a 'new Europe.' At the moment, policy-research relations are more akin to the description offered this youth researcher's humorous comment:

> "Occasionally we get some idea of what is happening behind the curtains nationally, but in relation to Europe I don't even know where the curtain is behind which I might try to peep!"

3. Pathways into the future. Recommendations for Community action

3.1 Areas of potential Community co-operation

Policy action on behalf of young people in Community countries has converged into three domains: raising levels of educational and vocational qualification (in order to increase employment chances and to reduce inequalities of opportunities in this respect); prevention and protection against major social risks (drugs, delinquency, AIDS); and youth information and guidance. For their part, youth research communities, frequently under dispersed and precarious circumstances, have demonstrated flexibility and dynamism. As a whole, youth research in Europe has produced a creditable body of empirical, theoretical and methodological knowledge, in both pure and applied fields and across a wide range of themes. At national and Community levels, further progress is slowed by a lack of appropriate material, resources and co-ordination.

Social policy perspectives on youth are thematic in character. In the first instance, policy measures are designed to counter or to resolve problems which in each case affect a *numerical minority*: the young unemployed, unqualified schoolleavers, young drug addicts, the young handicapped, etc. In the second instance, policy measures address a *particular aspect* of young people's lives: their patterns of social, political or associative participation, their consumption of cultural products, their access to housing, their leisure time activities, etc. Youth research has followed, to some extent, this 'thematic' mode of operation, which tends to result in a certain fragmentation and weak transfer value. Large scale national surveys, such as those carried out in Spain, Portugal and the FRG, do amass more integrated material, but of a primarily quantitative nature.

The knowledge we lack, however, is that which offers a *transversal and longitudinal* picture of social biography, of integrated processes of 'becoming and being.' In the relative absence of demand and resources for this kind of work, the study of young people's routes and trajectories through the youth phase is seldom undertaken. *Local-level* administrations and agencies are more likely to appreciate this style of work, in that they are concerned with specificities on a smaller scale: what produces *this* problem behaviour for *this* group in *this* locality? The value of longitudinal cohort studies in analysing processes of change and development is generally recognised, but in that they require a large and long-term funding allocation, they do not fare well in the inevitable competition for limited resources. However, bringing policy and research closer together implies placing more emphasis on these kinds of projects.

There are three ways in which Community co-operation might be exercised. Firstly, it might work to *co-ordinate the resources required* for European youth affairs, resources which are then put to work in the Member States. Youth *observatoires* exemplify one way of integrating different demands - producing research, paying direct attention to young people themselves, and improving policy-research relations. Some of those already in existence would like to operate in a more co-ordinated manner, and would welcome support. A second example is the widely felt need for more systematic evaluation of action programmes and policy measures directed at youth, which could be orchestrated by Community co-operation. Secondly, Community co-operation in developing *intercultural pedagogy* might be initiated. Voluntary organisations, youth workers, teachers and educational researchers might be the appropriate channels and partners for this work. Thirdly, Community co-operation in *youth research* itself would be of benefit. Young people's situations remain largely yet to be described; the context of youth transitions in Europe is changing. In particular, encouraging higher rates of voluntary mobility throws social, economic, cultural and geographical inequalities into fresh relief; we, in turn, need to throw more light on these issues.

In a coherent application of the auxiliary funding principle, the Community's involvement in youth affairs could play an important role. Firstly, in the policymaking interest, it could contribute to clarifying the 'shadow zones' in our understandings of young Europeans and youth transitions. Secondly, in the research interest, it could encourage the development of a genuinely European youth research.

3.2 Transnational projects

These recommendations are presented in the form of concrete projects. Each corresponds to the preoccupations, experiences and particular competences of one or more Member States, so that each (where realised) will meet with both interest and relevant expertise. However, these projects are not an exhaustive catalogue of all the viable suggestions that were made during the course of preparing this report. Three main criteria informed the selection of recommended projects:

•immediate or short-term *feasibility;*

•compiling a range of *varied, complementary projects*, which potentially offer the chance to develop a rich fund of research and policymaking resources, and which encourage the experience of co-operation between research and policy;

*themes offering the potential for *convergence* towards common interests: in realising these projects, the Community affirms the view that the new Europe towards which we are working is, in good measure, a Europe composed of 55 million young people.

The recommended projects are divided into three sub-categories, as listed immediately below; they are then each described individually.

• **Technical projects**, which aim to improve the basis for youth policy, practice and research in Europe:
*the facilitation of communication between national youth research communities, including between national centres (*observatoires*) for those Member States that have such an institution;
*the development of appropriate and effective monitoring and evaluation tools for action programmes and initiatives directed at young people;
*a focussed study of the linguistic needs of the Community;
*a feasibility study for the foundation of a regular publication Youth in Europe.

• **Pedagogic projects**, which aim to establish a basis for intercultural communication and education:
*the development of European training and qualification programmes for youth workers and educational/social work practitioners;
*programmes to enhance the cultural competence of youth researchers;
*in the context of a 'new Europe', intensified action initiatives to encourage the social and political participation of young people in their own communities and transnationally (for example, enhancement of the Community's Youth for Europe scheme).

• **Research projects**, which aim to establish a future-oriented information and interpretation basis for European youth affairs:
*the evolution of the situation of young people in Europe:
    °the emergence of 'postmodern' youth values and lifestyles;
    °the changing relations between the sexes;
    °the formation and implications of national, regional, and 'European' identities.
*the interrelationships between social inequalities and im/mobility:
    °regional disparities and the heterogeneity of 'European youth';
    °involuntary emigration of young people;
    °patterns of internal/regional/rural-urban migration of young people;
    °trajectories of marginalisation and exclusion which intensify processes of social polarisation and exposure to social risk.

• **Technical projects**

*Facilitating communication between national research communities and *observatoires*

Four Member States (France, Germany, Portugal and Spain) have, or are currently establishing, a national centre or *observatoire*. Each has its own particular profile, but also a desire to exchange experiences and methods. Such institutions should also assist in improving the quality of national data sources and policymakers' access to the research community. The Community might intervene to facilitate such co-ordination, but also more generally, to improve the utility of and access to European level statistics and to encourage greater comparability of nationally conducted studies.

*Evaluation of youth action programmes

What is the real scope of such actions? In relation to their objectives, what are their direct effects, what are their secondary effects? Attempts to improve the performance of education and training systems have brought positive results, but we have little information about those who drop out along the way, about those who are excluded in the first place, and about the global effects of improving young people's education and qualification levels. Information services are not highly frequented and voluntary activities do not sufficiently attract the young, but we do not know the reasons. Open questions such as these are the point of departure for specific collaboration between policymakers, researchers and practitioners.

*The linguistic needs of the Community

> 'In Luxembourg, our multilingualism makes us the natural multicultural interpreters.'
> 'We, the Danish, have the good fortune to have a language which protects our cultural intimacy. This is a national treasure, and it is well so.'
> 'We, the Belgians, have learned to practice passive communication: each speaks his own language, the other understands without speaking it.'
> 'We, the Spanish, Portuguese and the Greeks, have the disadvantage of always having to speak and to write in foreign languages. Being European is a big effort and a lot of work for us.'

These are artifically constructed statements, but they offer examples of genuine national realities as far

as language in social context is concerned. How might the Community respond? Presently, only poorly, since the diverse realities of young people's social-linguistic situations *both* within their borders *and* projected towards their European futures have been little considered, beyond the superficial level of modern foreign languages in formal school curricula. Yet this question is central to a policy-oriented analysis of present inequalities of life chances and their future redress: who has need of what, as far as languages are concerned, amongst the young in the Community? This is a project in which young people themselves could be actively involved. An openly-framed preliminary invitation to tender would also offer the opportunity to attract innovative proposals for looking at such issues as: who has need of what for what; the current state of young people's linguistic competence; the obstacles to language competency development, and who could do what and how to reduce them.

* Feasibility study for a regular publication

The Community might explore the potential for establishing a regular research and action periodical for youth affairs. Youth in Europe might have a parallel role to that enjoyed by Employment in Europe, which has become a respected and well used source of information. The feasibility study would in itself act to initiate policy-research communication and interchange about the appropriate ways of making information about youth affairs in Europe more accessible. Whatever its conclusions, the feasibility study would offer a space to look more closely at data sources and their comparibility, periodicity, diffusion and accessibility. Were a publication to see the light of day, its role would not be merely technical, but would testify to the interest attached by the Twelve to a social Europe for young people.

• Pedagogic projects

*Training and qualification of youth workers

There are noticeable intraCommunuty differences in the work undertaken by or devolved to voluntary youth associations, and hence similarly in the degree of direct government involvement in the management of youth action programmes. Across the Community, however, there is a concern to provide improved initial and in-service training and qualification ladders for youth workers - regardless of whether they are community volunteers or paid employees. This project aims to insert an intercultural or European qualification element into such programmes, developing the knowledge and skills necessary for working with and counselling young people in an increasingly mobile Europe. Youth workers' own mobility should equally be enhanced by such qualifying programmes.

*Youth researchers' professional development

The intercultural is already a reality for many groups of Community citizens. Acquiring the cultural competence to operate with confidence in the intercultural setting implies personal development that cannot be improvised, but must be learned and experienced. In brief: the acquisition of cultural competence is a pedagogic process *par excellence*, for which a real demand exists amongst youth researchers. All affirm the difficulties they have in wanting to work comparatively but not having the necessary minimum skills and knowledge of other cultures to do so well. The aim here, then, is to mount appropriate professional development programmes which respond to the demand. Paradoxically, youth research is not only interdisciplinary but also already intercultural, in that comparative studies *are* conducted. Typically, it is those who have some experience of comparative work who most clearly perceive the difficulties involved. The ultimate rationale for such programmes is not only to enhance the quality of European research (as opposed to research in Europe), but also to enrich everyday working life: 'bringing the intercultural home' has an add-on value for professional practice in all contexts.

*Young people's social and political participation

There is no doubt that young people are distancing themselves from traditional forms of social, political and associative participation; this trend is particularly marked for some groups rather than others (though precisely for which, in the absence of reliable information, is a matter of some debate). In the same way, it is „always the same ones" who benefit from the 'school for social action' that these forms of participation represent. A number of policy considerations are also nudging voluntary associations towards targeting programmes at disadvantaged youth, youth at risk, or 'non-engaged' youth. Community action programmes are increasingly concerned to attract similar groups, as a corrective to socially 'lopsided' participation rates. What lies behind young people's distancing? What are the remedies? How to promote initiative? In response, various Member States have begun to place more emphasis on local initiatives and devolving responsibility to young people themselves. Enhancing intergenerational co-operation is the aim of this project: developing a *pedagogy of welcome* into society for young people, centred on an active invitation to all young people to adopt positions of responsibility as early as possible (without looking closely at their chronological age), in genuine partnership with those older than themselves. 'Doing things together' is the best kind of social apprenticeship that adults can offer.

• **Research projects**

*Young people in Europe

Postmodern values: An expanding sociological and political literature uses young people's lifestyles and value patterns as indirect confirmation of the transition to post-industrial or post-modern society; alternatively, social change in the advanced societies is held to produce changes in values and lifestyles that we can first detect amongst young people; or, young people are treated as the prophets of a post-modern future seen through a glass darkly. However confused the debate, it is an important one to pursue: what is post-modern youth? What are post-modern representations, values, attitudes and behaviours? Is European youth moving towards 'post-modernity' in step and at the same speed? Does 'post-modernity' exist as an element of European identity?

Changing relations between the sexes: Across Europe, women's social position has changed in a variety of ways, at different speeds, and with varying specific consequences, since the 1960s. To clarify what has genuinely changed, both structurally and culturally, and to consider likely future developments, the Community could promote a European qualitative study to chart the transformation of gender *relations* amongst young people.

National/regional/European identities: Whether or not European identity exists as a concept and as a reality has already attracted sharp debate, so that this project ventures into a heavily politicised terrain. *But what do young people think about it all?* If it be true that uncertainty nourishes disagreement, then it would be useful to answer this question rather more precisely. A random selection of what we know already includes:

•that young Flemish and French Belgians are 'the same' in their relations with family, schooling, and so on;

•that, within the Community, the young Portuguese are those most 'attached' both to their own country and to Europe;

•that in 1990, 13% of young Europeans declared they were interested in national political life, 14% in regional life, and 14% in international political life.

Many other enticing items of information can be drawn from a rather disordered body of knowledge; the point is that all induce a desire to know more, and to know rather better - which is the focus of this project, with the aim of contributing to the dossier of political reflection on the subject of young Europeans.

*Social inequalities and im/mobility

Regional disparities and 'European youth': The information base on this topic remains sparse, despite a recently sharply rising interest. This project's task is to transcend current statistical, geographical, economic and social categories by developing theoretically informed accounts of *personal inequalities associated with regional disparities*, in order to develop appropriately corrective youth policies.

Involuntary emigration of young people: For some Member States, this is a critical problem, all the more so given the intransigent structural features that underly it. Voluntary youth mobility policy measures are currently imbalanced. They focus on encouraging mobility as a cultural and leisure activity, as an element of young people's education and training, and as an optional employment route. All this stands in stark contrast to the concrete circumstances of those young people who are obliged to emigrate; their situations reflect a growing injustice and inequality of life chances. As in the preceding project, the aim is to gain the insight required to redress such disadvantage.

Internal migration of young people: Whether from south to north, from east to west: young people migrate away from rural areas and from economically depressed regions, towards what they hope will be urbanised affluence, but in any case in the hope of finding employment, howsoever precarious. For many - but not all - Community countries, internal migration may seem relatively minor in scale; perhaps in the 1980s a problem in so far as young people typically do not want to move to find training and employment in more prosperous regions. But apart from its dramatic forms (e.g. runaways), internal migration has been little studied in most Member States (Greece is the most notable exception). It constitutes a potential 'risk zone' for young people, and deserves closer attention. This project might aim to develop a multi-level European model which can render migration processes more visible (as in the case of 'two-step' migration in Ireland).

Trajectories of marginalisation and exclusion: It is not only the young Portuguese who, in certain circumstances, are at risk of having to leave school too early because their income is indispensable to the family budget, despite the precarity and low pay of the jobs they can find. This may be a flagrant case of inequality of educational opportunity, but it is far from being the only example. In this project, the aim is to model the varieties of routes through the youth phase that lead to similar/dissimilar outcomes, including their exclusionary qualities even where social and economic integration *appears* to be proceeding successfully. For example, whilst participation in a youth training programme might be judged as evidence of an integration process, it may, perversely, contribute to marginalisation, insofar as it acts as a 'negative labelling process' in the labour market. Similarly, involuntary émigrés

are caught in very complex trajectories of cultural and economic exclusion and integration, which have rarely been studied holistically.

3.3 Concluding remarks

The task of this report was, in the first instance, to present a snapshot view of the situation of young people in the European Community. However, being young is a process of personal and social development, and youth is a social construction. We therefore began by looking at how the youth phase is currently constituted in the Member States. Within a broad, long-term trend towards the lengthening of the youth phase, very divergent patterns were revealed for education, family, and employment transitions towards adulthood. Equally, the limits imposed by the available data resources at both national and European levels were exposed. We underlined the Community interest in - and indeed necessity for - acquiring a more integrated, holistic understanding of young people's circumstances, ways of life and values, especially in relation to the task of building a social Europe for youth.

The evident need for an improved European understanding of youth and for a forum for action on youth affairs led us to look more closely at youth research, youth policy and policy-research relations in the Member States. Two major dimensions of social policy action for youth emerged. On the one hand, global policies directed at young people are mainly of a sociocultural and socioeducative nature, interested to promote responsible and creative social and political participation. On the other hand, there are (sometimes motley) collections of 'prevention and cure' measures, which seek to redress the consequences of inequalities, of exposure to risks, and of 'social skids.' Such policy measures target particular categories of young people (the unemployed, the disadvantaged, the drug dependent, the excluded, ...). Both dimensions of policy action are essentially educative in nature (although the pedagogies may differ). They emphasise active participation, individual responsibility, and social integration. However, despite the interest displayed in Community initiatives, the policy role accorded to Europe remains weak. Just as education systems - which are held to underpin democracy - remain ethnocentric, plans of policy action for young people remain nationally bound.

Youth research itself seems to have entered a phase of transition. Metaphorically, youth research has taken leave of its nationally-defined childhoods, is increasingly fired by youthful enthusiasm for a transnational future, but does not yet have a secure basis for the transition to European adulthood. By and large, youth research in the Member States is struggling towards professional recognition and autonomy in rather constrained circumstances. On the whole, its funding resources are limited and

very much circumscribed by immediate policy priorities, its professional infrastructure fragmented and underdeveloped. At the same time, the field shows considerable dynamism and potential.

As individual elements, policy, research and youth itself all have some experience of European, as opposed to national, rhythms. As an interlinked triad, Policy/Research/Youth has not yet done so: the Community's role might be to bring about an integrated interculturation. To this end, recommendations in the form of projects have been proposed. Each of the project 'quarries' to be opened up has specific aims, but in their totality, they converge towards a collective enrichment of understanding, competencies, and means of action. Taken together, the projects draw the contours of a 'grown-up', European perspective on youth affairs. The challenge is two-fold: not only to illuminate the situations of young Europeans intellingtly, but also to uncover and realise those common interests which form the basis of Community action on behalf of young people, without whom we in Europe can envisage no future.

Footnotes

1 At the informal meeting of Ministers held in Rome on 9th November 1990; and see the documents COM (90) 334, August 1990: The rationalisation and co-ordination of vocational training Programmes at Community level; COM(90) 469, October 1990: Young People in the European Community; COM(90) 467, November 1990: An action programme for the vocational qualification of young people and their preparation for adult and working life; COM(90) 470, November 1990: An action programme to promote youth exchanges and mobility in the Community - the Youth for Europe programme; EURYDICE, June 1990: Activities of the CEC in the fields of education, training and youth policy during 1989; PETRA, January 1990: Initial Training - towards 1992.

2 These meetings were facilitated by the national delegates to the Research Into Youth Matters Group, brought together under the auspices of the European Commission's Task Force on Human Resources, Youth and Education (see Appendix).

3 A series of reports on East German youth are currently being prepared for the German Ministry of Youth Affairs, but these were not available in time for inclusion in this report. Since Eurostat and similar comparative statistical sources do not yet include data for the ex-GDR, this means that the latest Young Europeans survey is the only immediate source of information.

4 It is equally as important to bear in mind what such data cannot easily do, which by extension indicates the blank areas in our knowledge and understanding of young people's lives. Aggregate statistics give us very little access to the youth phase as an autonomous cultural field of interests, activities, values and orientations. Neither can they expose changing cultural meanings and their relevance for shifting patterns of behaviour. Most especially, they cannot offer *holistic* answers to the questions *who, when, how and why*.

5 We referred earlier (see fn.4) to the relative opacity of numerical description for eliciting meanings and motivations. There are two further points to add. Firstly, cross-tabulations cannot easily move beyond the two-dimensional and yet retain interpretive legibility. Therefore in practice, tabular breakdowns are almost always a sequence of two-variable cells, i.e. A against B, A against C, A against D, [....]; perhaps also B against C, B against D, C against D, [....]. Regression and factor analyses are technical solutions, but they demand a level of data sophistication (measurement level, distribution) that is frequently impossible to guarantee in social research. Secondly, trends in statistical data are reliable indicators of real differences between groups only under given conditions. In particular, cell frequencies need to be large enough to reduce 'fluke' findings. The greater the number of data cells in a tabulation, the smaller the frequencies. The more precisely groups are identified, i.e. by using clusters of indicators rather than simply one defining attribute (such as age, or nationality, or [....]), the greater the number of possible cells - and the smaller the possible frequencies, so the less reliable the findings. Even what looks like a very large sample can rapidly produce very small cells. Yet for a sensitive analysis of commonalities and, especially, differences, it is absolutely necessary to specify groups precisely. We can see this problem in the Young Europeans surveys themselves. The 1990 sample totals 7,600 15-24 year olds, divided into 600 respondents from each Member State. (The ex-

GDR and ex-FRG were treated as two states for sampling purposes, i.e. 600 each; an extra 200 Northern Ireland respondents were added to the 600 for Great Britain.) Luxembourg, with 200 respondents, was the exception, given its small population. Firstly, there are about 55 million 15-24 year olds in the Community; 7,600 is a tiny sampling fraction. The smaller the sample *in relation to* the population from which it is drawn, the greater the possibility of unreliable findings due to sampling error. But the main problem lies in the rapidly declining cell sizes once the sample is divided up into more precise groups. This makes it very difficult for the analysis to move beyond single variable breakdowns; and this is indeed why the tabulations restrict themselves to *separate* breakdowns by age-group; by sex; by educational level; by economic activity; and by nationality. However, this equally reduces the interpretive value of the findings. The position is particularly acute in the case of Luxembourg. We have no option but to place potential question marks on the values shown in some of the tables, especially for those where there are a large number of possible response categories (for example, orientations towards political, social and youth issues). The conclusion we must draw is that such surveys are better at presenting broad similarities across the sample (by using measures of central tendency, i.e. averages) than they are at exposing differences and interrelations within the sample (by using measures of dispersion, i.e. range, standard deviation, etc.). But this raises the question of whether broad averages are useful when the range of response is wide and the sample disparate. The answer is that they are not, since averages are of poor interpretive potential under such circumstances. This is one of the problems with using 'EUR12', which is helpful only as a benchmark for orientation across a range of values, not as an interpretive tool in itself. National Census and Eurostat statistics do not suffer from the problems of sample size and error as such, but they have two other drawbacks. The first is that these statistics are not targeted at youth in particular, but at the population at large, although age breakdowns for major items such as rates of economic activity, marriage, fertility, household composition, educational participation, etc., are provided. The second drawback is that comparative statistics have to combine national data sources, which themselves do not use identical category definitions. To raise comparability, categories typically become broader - and thus less useful for interpretation. None of these points are intended to mean that surveys and statistics are not useful and important sources, but that they, too, have disadvantages, and cannot alone suffice for the kind of youth research required at European level.

6 The Community countries not included in this series were Belgium, Denmark, and Luxembourg.

7 The question of possible changes in young people's values and orientations is not included as a separate topic in this report, for two reasons. Firstly, our main task is to describe young people's situations, i.e. the circumstances of their lives. Values and orientations are not immaterial to those circumstances, but to address this adequately requires much more space than is available here. Secondly, there are very complex methodological problems involved in comparing data of this kind, very little of which is available at a European level, apart from the questions included in the Young Europeans surveys. The task of establishing comparability for material collated at national level is a project in itself, which we could not, on this occasion, undertake. The development of a European youth research perspective is itself part of such a project.

8 This view is the essence of the *individualisation thesis*, which has gained increasing support in the international youth research community. It argues that advanced industrial societies are undergoing a renewed phase of modernisation, often referred to as the transition to postmodern or postindustrial society. As in the transition to industrial society, economic, technological and cultural elements work together with enough intensity and dynamism to prompt large-scale social change. Such change includes a renewed push towards individualisation. On the one hand, community and collective action become less significant as the means by which societies operate and survive. People are connected into the social fabric less through their membership of groups (family/kinship, socio-political associations, occupational/task groups), and more through their highly differentiated and individual contributions and orientations. On the other hand, people begin to understand themselves as individuals first, members of a collectivity second. This means, for example, that the motivation to engage in an activity (whether in leisure time, to earn a living or as part of personal life) prioritises self-development and self-fulfilment. It is important to recognise that such changes are socially induced. They are related, for example, to the kind of workforce required by an advanced technology and economy: highly qualified, mobile, flexible, etc. They result from educational processes emphasising competition and individual achievement; and so on. These ideas have gained currency in the youth research community for two reasons. Firstly, they help to explain the observable fragmentation of the youth phase. Secondly, if significant social change is taking place, it should have most effect on young people, who have traditionally been seen to 'signpost the future'. For descriptions and discussions, see Chisholm et al., 1990; Krüger,1988; the debate was initially spurred by Beck's influential text Risikogesellschaft (1986).

9 This raises the question of which life events fall into the purview of the youth phase. Life events are part of how we define the youth phase itself. Can we envisage the transition to adulthood *without* marriage (or stable cohabitation)? Particular subcultures aside, everyday experience suggests that single and childless 40 year olds are not regarded as fully 'grown-up' either by their families or by those of their peers who are married/cohabiting or who have children. Linguistic markers, however outdated, still underline this status - for example, *'Junggeselle'* (bachelor); spinster.

10 It is important to stress that these patterns are abstract generalisations, and do not in any way reflect the range of real behaviours in any country, region or group. As soon as we add in other variables, such as educational qualification level, socio-economic origin, ethnicity, etc., the generalisations break down. Additionally, statistical averages of this kind tell us nothing about how many people in the relevant cohorts or population marry. They simply summarise the ages of those who do marry. Nevertheless, such data do offer us a rough orientation with which to begin the task of mapping a social and cultural geography of Europe.

11 In general, marital status has a greater effect on young men's than on young women's economic activity rates. Approximately 95% of young married men are economically active everywhere in the Community, except for in Italy and in The Netherlands (around 85%). Single young men have much lower activity rates, ranging from 29% in Belgium to about 65% in the UK. Marital status has a marked effect on young women's activity rates only in Denmark, Portugal, Luxembourg and especially, in France and Belgium. Marriage prompts very much higher activity rates for *both* sexes, then, in these

two last named countries (Eurostat, 1988 Labour Force Survey, Table O-4).

12 It is well-known that official unemployment rates, on which these figures are based, underestimate the real incidence of unemployment, especially in the case of women (of all ages), who are more likely to become caught up in or withdraw into full-time domesticity if they cannot find employment.

13 Systematic information on youth transitions and disadvantage for ethnic and racial minorities is scant at national level in most Member States, and non-existent at European level. This issue is nevertheless a crucial one for the coming decade (see, for example, Wrench, 1990). For ethnic/racial disadvantage in transition to the labour market in the UK, see Lee and Wrench, 1987.

14 An analysis of UK National Child Development Study data for the 1970s supports young people's views (Payne,1987), but credential inflation means that the stakes have been raised during the 1980s.

15 The historical and cultural specificity of education and training systems is carried over into statistical categories. Member States use differing understandings of what sort of participation at what age/stage counts as education or as training. They also have varying education and training policy priorities. Both factors influence decisions about what sort of figures to collect and how they should be grouped together. National statistics are therefore difficult to use directly except for very basic questions. International education and training statistics, such as those compiled by OECD, introduce a further layer of redefinition of categories in order to introduce greater comparability. However, agencies compiling these data do not use standard definitions either. This accounts for the sometimes marked variations in the 'same' statistics compiled by different agencies. Comparing these data in numerical form rapidly obscures the larger picture; Table 12 therefore uses graphical description only. It is the relations between young people's educational situations across the Community that we are primarily concerned with, not the precise figures involved. Table 12a provides these data as supporting material, to indicate the basis for Table 12.

16 The most recent and most comprehensive international figures available are those from OECD for the mid-1980s. The Community Labour Force Survey for 1988 offers a more recent, but less detailed source. Allowing for the different values resulting from different category definitions, the later data suggest that the trend towards higher rates of educational participation has continued, but that the inter-country relationships shown in Table 12 remain valid.

17 The unemployed are included in the economically active population.

18 The Youth Cohort Study's most recent findings indicate 58% of 17 year olds in full time education or in Youth Training in 1989 compared with 36% in 1985 (LMQR, Feb 1991, p.8). The Youth Training scheme as strategy and practice remains a subject of some debate, cf., for example, Raffe,1990.

19 In this beginning section (but not necessarily subsequently), we have included some reference to all eleven Community countries visited in the course of preparation of this report. Italy is not, therefore, included here (see Appendix). Information from the documents submitted by the delegated national experts to the Research on Youth Matters Group has been included for Italy (and for other Member States) where relevant. The information base for Italy is, therefore, small; it is supplemented by our own knowledge drawing on professional youth researcher networks, but we have no reliable access to Italian perspectives on youth policy. So, for example, the documents do not refer to IARD in Milan, which has conducted three major surveys of Italian youth since the late 1970s (and is planning a further survey for 1992). CENSIS's recent report for the government on the situation of young people in Italy makes considerable use of the IARD survey findings (and we too have referred to them in Part 1 of this report).

Appendix: Method of work

This report was prepared between February and June 1991; meetings in eleven of the twelve Member States were held between March and June (see footnote 19 of this report). The Research into Youth Matters Group (RYM Group; its members are listed below) was brought together by the Commission's Task Force in 1990. Each Member State nominated a national expert on youth affairs to the group; some members are government officials and policymakers, others are academics and youth researchers. In summer 1990 the RYM Group members were requested to draw up a 'map' of existing research data on youth for their respective countries. Most Member States had provided a document by early 1991. In November 1990, the Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs in the Member States requested a 'snapshot' report on the situation of young people in the Community (see footnote 1 of this report). The documents provided by the members of the RYM Group enabled an initial evaluation of what form this 'snapshot' might take, and how relevant information might be assembled. The diversity of these documents and the need for rapid production suggested a twin-pronged strategy. Part 1 of the report should offer a global view of youth transitions in the European Community, using those Eurostat (and complementary international) statistical sources *immediately* available. Part 2 should provide an *integrated* descriptive and evaluative account of youth policy, youth research and the relations between the two. On the basis of both parts, a series of recommendations for Community action on youth affairs (in the form of technical, pedagogic and research projects) might be made. This plan was adopted by the Commission and affirmed by the RYM Group in February 1991.

The method of work used in the first part of the report is self-explanatory. For the second part of the report, qualitative research techniques and a simplified application of constant comparative analysis were adopted. The aim was to produce - in broad terms - an 'on the hoof' illuminative evaluation. The RYM Group members agreed to host one/two day meetings on their 'home ground.' The forms these meetings took, those invited to participate and the themes to be covered, were matters for the respective national experts to determine. The meetings did indeed take very different forms, ranging from long discussions with one or two individuals in their offices to formal conferences with over thirty participants. Differing mixtures of policymakers, practitioners and researchers were encountered; sometimes separately, sometimes together, sometimes only one or two of the three 'interest groups.' The national experts sometimes arranged the meetings in consultation with ourselves, sometimes not at all. Some of these differences were coincidental, others provided useful information in themselves. The information provided in the meetings was subsequently written up into fieldnotes in the usual manner. This was supplemented by the documents provided by the RYM Group members and by written materials offered at the meetings. These data were then analysed and written up as Part 2 of

the report. In June, an interim report was prepared for the Commission; the final draft was then completed within a month. The original report was written in a mixture of English and French; between July and September, the full text was translated *in toto* into English, French and German (Chisholm: from French into English; from English and French into German; Bergeret: from English into French).

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Luxembourg: Mr. Nico Meisch, Service National de la Jeunesse, Luxembourg

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Spain: Mr. Juan Saez Marin, Instituto de la Juventud, Madrid

United Kingdom: Mr. Richard Bartholomew, Department of Employment, Research Section, London

Council of Europe representative: Mr. Peter Lauritzen, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg

Commission of the European Communities: Ms. Tina Viollier and Ms. Agnès Haesendonck, Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth; Ms. Donatella Capone, Directorate-General for Information, Communication and Culture, Unité Europe des Citoyens

European Community Youth Exchange Bureau: Ms. Edith van der Velden and Ms. Catherine Tsavdaridou

Consultants: Mr. Jean-Marie Bergeret (Paris); Dr. Lynne Chisholm (London/Bremen)

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This bibliography lists only those items referred to in the body of the report. It does not include all papers given to us in the course of the meetings held in the Member States. To do so would have required a separate documentation project, given both the quantity and the inevitable selectivity of the materials we received.

Abbreviations

CEC: Commission of the European Communities (Brussels)
CEDEFOP: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Berlin)
OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Paris)
OOPEC: Office for Official Publications of the European Community (Luxembourg)

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